In the Name of Allah,
the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

قال الله تعالى:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴾

Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification. (*Sūrat al-Aḥzāb* 33:33).

Prophetic traditions mentioned in both in Sunnī and Shī'ah authoritative reference books of *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr* (exegesis of the Qur'an) have confirmed that this holy verse was revealed to exclusively refer to the People of the Cloak [*ahl al-kisā'*], viz. Muḥammad, 'Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn ('a) as the *Ahl al-Bayt* (People of the Household).

For instance, refer to the following references:

Sunnī

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), *al-Musnad*, 1:231; 4:107; 6:292, 304; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130; Al-Tirmidhī (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al.; Al-Dūlābī (d. 310 AH), *Al-Dhuriyyah al-Ṭāhirah al-Nabawiyyah*, p. 108; Al-Nasā'ī (d. 303 AH), *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā'*, 5:108; 113; Al-Ḥakīm al-Nayshābūrī (d. 405 AH), *Al-Mustadrak 'ala' ṣ-Ṣahīḥāyn*, 2:416, 3:133, 146-147; Al-Zarkashī (d. 794 AH), *Al-Burhān*, p. 197; Ibn Hājar al-Asqalānī (d. 852 AH), *Fatḥ al-Barī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7:104.

Shī'ah

Al-Kulaynī (d. 328 AH), *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, 1:287; Ibn Babawayh (d. 329 AH), *Al-Imāmah wa' t-Tabṣīrah*, p. 47, *ḥadīth* 29; Al-Maghribī (d. 363 AH), *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, pp. 35, 37; Al-Ṣādūq (d. 381 AH), *Al-Khiṣāl*, pp. 403, 550; Al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH), *Al-Amalī*, *ḥadīth* 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse recorded in the following books of *tafsīr*: Al-Jassās (d. 370 AH), *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*; Al-Wāḥidī (d. 468 AH), *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*; Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH), *Zād al-Masīr*; Al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH), *Al-Jāmi' Li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*; Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Tha'labī (d. 825 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Ṭabarī (d. 875 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 AH), *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*; Al-Shawkānī (d. 1250 AH), *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*; Al-'Ayyāshī (d. 320 AH), *Tafsīr*; Al-Qummī (d. 329 AH), *Tafsīr*; Furt al-Kūfī (d. 352 AH), *Tafsīr* at the margin of the exegesis of *Sūrat al-Nisā'* verse 59; Al-Ṭabarsī (d. 560 AH), *Majma' al-Bayān*, as well as many other sources.

THE ROLE OF
THE AHL AL-BAYT (‘a)
IN BUILDING THE VIRTUOUS COMMUNITY

BOOK FOUR:

THE SECURITY SYSTEM
OF THE VIRTUOUS COMMUNITY

قال رسول الله ﷺ:

"إني تارك فيكُمُ الثَقلين: كتاب الله، وعترتي أهلَ بيتي، ما إن تمسكتُم بهما لن تضلوا أبداً وأنَّهُما لَن يَفترِقا حتّى يردا عَليَّ الحوضَ"

The Messenger of Allah (*ṣ*) said:

"Verily, I am leaving among you two precious things [*thaqalayn*]: The Book of Allah and my progeny [*'itratī*], the members of my Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [*ḥawḍ*] (of *Kawthar*)."

Some references:

- Al-Ḥākim an-Nayshābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā'ṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533
- Muslim, *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ*, (English translation), book 31, *ḥadīth*s 5920-3
- At-Tirmidhī, *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, *ḥadīth*s 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219
- An-Nasā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, *ḥadīth* 79
- Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190
- Ibn al-'Athīr, *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 277
- Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa'n-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 209
- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, vol. 6, p. 199

Naṣīr ad-Dīn al-Albanī, *Silsilāt al-Aḥādīth aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah* (Kuwait: Ad-Dār aṣ-Ṣalāfiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358

THE ROLE OF
THE AHL AL-BAYT

IN BUILDING THE VIRTUOUS COMMUNITY

BOOK FOUR:
THE SECURITY SYSTEM
OF THE VIRTUOUS COMMUNITY

ĀYATULLĀH SAYYID
MUḤAMMAD BĀQIR AL-ḤAKĪM

Translator

Badr Shahin

Cultural Affairs Department
Ahl al-Bayt(ʿa) World Assembly

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Author: Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Al-ḥakīm
Project supervisor: Translation Unit, Cultural Affairs Department Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly (ABWA)
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www.ahl-ul-bayt.org
info@ahl-ul-bayt.org

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BOOK FOUR:
THE SECURITY SYSTEM
OF THE VIRTUOUS COMMUNITY

Prelude: Significance of the Security System

Chapter One: General Measures of the Security System

Chapter Two: Policies of General Security

This discussion regarding the security system of the virtuous community consists of a prelude and two chapters. The prelude discusses the significance and necessity of security in building the virtuous community. Chapter 1 examines the general features that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) instituted to operate this security system. Chapter 2 looks at the general policies that the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) followed to maintain the security system.

PRELUDE

There are many reasons the security system of the virtuous community was paid special importance by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) in their program of building a virtuous community. Some of these reasons are examined in the following discussion:

Political Foundations and Conditions

The first reason was related to the political and social conditions faced by the individuals of the virtuous community. To explain, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers had to encounter harsh political and social conditions under which they were exposed to death penalties, banishment, pursuit, persecution, interrogation about their doctrines to ascertain their political tendencies, and false accusations of atheism, apostasy, skepticism, heresy, and fragmentation of Islamic unity.

The reasons for such harsh conditions can be summarized in the following points:

A. Most political regimes in the Muslim world have practiced political terrorism and persecution to defend their authority because of discrepancy in doctrines, political views and sectarian rituals. In most cases, the political states that have ruled Muslims have not allowed doctrinal, intellectual, sectarian or political pluralism except during

the periods of the Holy Prophet and Imam `Alī—peace be upon them.[1]

B. The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers faced difficult and painful political situations due to the fact that they, i.e. the virtuous community, took upon themselves the general responsibility of defending Islam and its true doctrine and resisting any attempt at misrepresentation and consequent deviation of the Muslim nation. In addition, they exclusively undertook the responsibility of resisting the injustice, persecution and tyranny of the ruling authorities towards Muslim communities as well as external dangers that threatened the nation.

This political stand of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers was doubtless the main reason for their persecution. However, the matter did not stop at this, and persecution extended to include even opposition to specific doctrines and rituals. The conflict therefore took a religious and sectarian form because the rulers saw these doctrines and rituals as positive evidence that verified political identity and affiliation to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). Therefore, the actual stimulus of the persecution was political identity and loyalty to the religious personality representing the original truth. Sectarian discrepancies would naturally point to political identity; therefore, this identity became the impetus of accusations, persecution and pursuit because the political loyalty of the public was intermixed with their daily religious affairs. Moreover, religious issues and

1- I have discussed this topic in my book entitled ‘*al-wiḥdah al-islāmiyyah min manẓūr al-thaqalayn* (Islamic Unity from the Perspective of the Two Weighty Things—i.e. the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahl al-Bayt)’, pp. 162-186 and in an independent lecture, to which I have referred in Book III, Chapter: Political Trends.

trends were actually political issues because society, in its entire detail, was based on religion and loyalty to one sect or another.

Consequently, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers suffered harsh ordeals regarding the practice of their rituals and acts of worship and their ways of expressing their beliefs, not because they disagreed with the ruling authorities and other Muslims in their beliefs, but because these rituals indicated their political identity—an identity that was rejected by the rulers who wanted to justify their actions before the public. Of course, the rulers knew that their justifications would not be acceptable to the public unless they were concealed under the garb of religion and sacredness. Nevertheless, in most cases opposition to the ruling authorities, rejection of injustice and oppression and love and loyally towards the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) were not acceptable justifications, because such matters were familiar and generally accepted by Muslims. A problem that existed though was that most Muslims did not have sufficient courage and ethical commitment to oppose and reject the practices of the ruling authorities and declare loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

In any case, an important point is that the justifications upon which the ruling authorities depended were false accusations against the true religious creed of Islam.[1]

1- An analytical view of this socio-political phenomenon clearly demonstrates the difference between the cruelty that the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) suffered because of some beliefs that were in disagreement with other sects and the harm suffered by the followers of some sects at the hands of other sects—despite the fact that the disagreements of the these sects with one another were not fewer, and were perhaps more, than ⇨

C. All through the history of Islam, Muslim society witnessed political and religious uprisings and anarchy, with side effects injuring the virtuous community and followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). Although they were not associated with these opposing groups, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers, who rejected anarchy in the

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the doctrinal or jurisprudential disagreements between these sects and the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) school and its followers.

Nevertheless, harsh persecution between the other sects and the ruling authorities did not exist in the same way nor continue for such a long period; however, persecution against the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers never stoped at all.

Undoubtedly, the actual reason for such persecution was the political identity of the Ahl al-Bayt’s followers and their protest against injustice and tyranny. Such being the case, doctrinal practices identified the individuals who supported this political protest. As a result, doctrinal commitments and denominational practice of rituals received the same harsh treatment even among other Muslim sects when they signified affiliation to a political trend opposing the ruling authorities, such as the conflict that took place between the Mu`tazilah and the Ash`ariyyah, or the conflicts between certain Muslim (Sunni) sects in some ages, or the present-day opposition to the Islamic veil (*ḥijāb*) and other Islamic commitments that indicate the political identity of those loyal to them.

The sectarian political condition could be deeply implanted and firmly established in the milieus of the Muslim nation and enjoy a firm social albeit non-political identity in spite of being the target of the ruling authorities’ persecution. This is accelerated because of malice, unfounded fanaticism as well as intellectual and social retardation of the nation, as seen between other Muslim sects in some periods of the history of Islam, however, among the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers this was seen throughout history because they (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt and their followers) were distinctively characterized by a firmly-rooted identity, faith and steadfastness in political situations.

community, tasted the blazing fire and suffered the consequences and negative effects of these uprisings because of malicious information, devious personal goals, or confusion in analysis due to the fact that most of these revolutions and uprisings raised mottos similar to those of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers, attracted large numbers of followers and moved in the milieus of those who were politically classified as acting loyally towards or belonging to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

These harsh conditions forced the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) to follow a policy and plan a system that would assure the security of the virtuous community and to opt for the most appropriate, yet perhaps undesireable[1], measures to protect the community from persecution, exile and even annihilation.

Requirements of Religious Law

The second reason special importance was paid to the security system of the virtuous community was related to the inevitable outcome of conformity to true religious laws by the virtuous community which necessitated existence as a financially independent entity in order to achieve its perfection through familiarity with the accurate religious laws and in order that authorities could perform their duties, including arbitration between disputing parties of the community and execution of authority of administration over private or communal properties that did not have a particular custodian. This developed from the doctrinal, political, and practical multidimensional acquaintance of

1- Such as the measures adopted by Imam Ḥasan (‘a) when he concluded a truce with Mu`āwiyah in order to maintain the existence and survival of the virtuous community.

the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) with the deviation and tyranny of the ruling authorities of the Islamic state, their inescapability from fulfilling their undertakings and their pledge to defend the general political entity of Islam and maintain the unity of the Muslim nation.

Naturally, such a political and social situation necessitated exactitude to contend with its intricacy and a special security system that would lead to perfection of the virtuous community, assist its activities and grant it flexibility in motion and adaptation with the surrounding circumstances.

Suppression of Destructive Efforts

The third reason special importance was paid to the security system of the virtuous community was to protect the virtuous community from individuals surreptitiously entering the community to damage, defame, or achieve futile personal benefits at the expense of common interests of the community, such as by use of siege and house arrest—under which the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) lived in the later ages—virtually imprisoning leaders and religious scholars of the virtuous community in their homes during various periods of tyrannical rule.

If we take a look at the goals of the security system of the virtuous community carefully, we discover that this system is not restricted to protecting the community against external persecution or achieving flexibility in activities; rather, it includes opposing the movements of the *ghulāt* (extremists) and the opportunists who falsely claimed Shī`ism in order to attain personal interests. In the coming chapter, we will discuss these facts in more detail.

CHAPTER ONE:
GENERAL MEASURES
OF THE SECURITY SYSTEM

The general measures of the security system of the virtuous community can be summed up in the following four points:

1. Taqiyyah

2. Concealment of Secrets

3. Presence in the Ruling System

4. Immigration

TAQIYYAH

Fields of Discussions of Taqiyyah

Taqiyyah[1] was of special importance to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). Numerous *ḥadīths* and narrations, many of which have been uninterruptedly and authentically reported, have cited *taqiyyah* as their subject matter, discussed it from various angles, and dealt with all its diverse aspects. As a matter of fact, *taqiyyah* is the most important measure of the security system and covers all other measures. The following are important aspects of *taqiyyah*:

- Its place in Islamic doctrine and evidence quoted from the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah to prove its validity.
- The significance of *taqiyyah* in religion including commitments and covenants to Almighty Allah. In this respect, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) are reported to have said:

التَّقِيَّةُ دِينِي وَدِينُ آبَائِي.	*Taqiyyah* is my religion and the religion of my fathers.
مَنْ لاَ تَقِيَّةَ لَهُ لاَ دِينَ لَهُ.	Faithless is he who does not practice *taqiyyah.*
مَا عُبِدَ اللهُ بِشَيْءٍ أَفْضَلَ مِنَ التَّقِيَّةِ.	Almighty Allah has never been worshipped through a matter more appreciated by Him than (*taqiyyah*).

1- *Taqiyyah* (self-protection) is the practice of concealing one’s belief and foregoing ordinary religious duties when under the threat of death or injury to oneself or ones brethren-in-faith.

- The religious laws and duties appertaining to *taqiyyah* and cases where it is obligatory (*wājib*), recommended (*mustaḥabb*), or prohibited (*ḥarām*); the limits of *taqiyyah*; and its religious consequences. This aspect is also related to the jurisprudential area of *taqiyyah*.
- The aspects of *taqiyyah* related to political and social security which will be our main concern in this discussion.[1]

Taqiyyah has wide-ranging significance if understood on the strength of traditions. In addition to abidance by the jurisprudential issues of one's own sect while going through the motions of another, taqiyyah includes concealment of secrets in political, social, and cultural activities. It also implies showing courtesy and civility in association with others.[2] However, in this discussion, I will concentrate on the first meaning; namely, concealment of beliefs and some jurisprudential duties while pretending belief in an opposing doctrine to evade persecution, harm, and loss.

When the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers faced persecution by the ruling authorities because of their doctrinal and sectarian commitments, the practice of *taqiyyah* was established by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) based on

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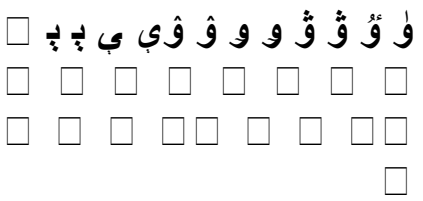
1- The first and second points will be discussed in detail in one of the future volumes of this series. The third point is a jurisprudential thesis that has been discussed elsewhere by jurisprudents.

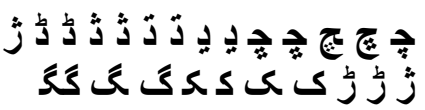
2- These meanings have been discussed in my book entitled, ‘*al-wiḥdah al-islāmiyyah min manẓūr al-thaqalayn* (Islamic Unity from the Perspective of the Two Weighty Things—i.e. the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a)).’

the principle of permission to avoid harassment. This permission has been originally granted by Almighty Allah in the Holy Qur'ān which reads:

Let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers rather than believers—if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah—except by way of precaution that ye may guard yourselves from them; however, Allah cautions you to remember Him, for the final goal is to Allah. (3:28)



Any one who, after accepting faith in Allah, utters unbelief—except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in faith; but whoso opens their breast to unbelief, on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a dreadful penalty. (16:106)



The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) directed their followers to practice *taqiyyah*, as one of the important religious duties connected with faith, religion, and seeking nearness to Almighty Allah. They also emphasized this because they wanted to guarantee protection of the virtuous community, maintenance of its security, concord and capability of carrying out its functions as explained in the following narration of `Abdullāh ibn Abī-Ya`fūr who reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) to have said:

إِتَّقُوا عَلَى دِينِكُمْ، وَأَحْيُوهُ بِالتَّقِيَّة. فَإِنَّهُ لاَ إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لاَ تَقِيَّةَ لَهُ. إِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ فِي النَّاسِ كَالنَّحْلِ فِي الطَّيْرِ، وَلَوْ أَنَّ الطَّيْرَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَجْوَافِ النَّحْلِ مَا بَقِيَ مِنْهَا شَيْءٌ إِلاَّ أَكَلَتْهُ. وَلَوْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ عَلِمُوا مَا فِي أَجْوَافِكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ تُحِبُّونَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ لأَكَلُوكُمْ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، وَلَنَحَلُوكُمْ بِالسَّرِّ وَالْعَلاَنِيَة. رَحِمَ اللهُ عَبْداً مِنْكُمْ كَانَ عَلَى وِلاَيَتِنَا.

Fear for your religion! Keep it alive by means of pious dissimulation. Verily, faithless is he who does not practice *taqiyyah*. Among people, you (i.e. the Shī`ah) are just like bees among birds. Had birds known what there is in the abdomens of bees, they would have eaten them completely. Likewise, had people known what you carry in your hearts concerning your love for us—the Ahl al-Bayt—they would have eaten you with their tongues and disgraced you overtly and covertly. May Allah have mercy upon a servant from you who abides by (the terms of) loyalty to us.[7]

7- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:461, S. 24 (*wujūb al-taqiyyah*), H. 7 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulaynī's *al-Kāfī*.
All Muslims and all rational people conform to this social and political behavior, yet generally, but some Muslim sects try to provide reasoning for this behavior even to the extent of forging and attributing falsities to the Holy Prophet (ṣ) for making peace, acquiescing, and complying with unjust rulers, thus changing this policy into a fixed mode instead of an exception to be used in emergency. Nevertheless, this strategy was affixed to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) because in their times they were continually exposed to persecution. They proclaimed that this approach of keeping silent should be used only when necessary, not as a daily activity, and that *taqiyyah* is a strategy with restricted features. Further, yet general, details will be cited in future discussions.

Why Taqiyyah?

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) adopted *taqiyyah* from among a number of major choices in the struggle against persecution, terrorism and even annihilation that was practiced on certain occasions against them and their partisans. These options were:

1. Seclusion from society

One option that the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) had was to order their followers to isolate themselves from Muslim society, retire or flee with their family members to remote regions where the ruling authorities could not reach them, such as mountains, caves, and jungles. If they did so, they would be able to practice their rituals as completely as required and openly voice their beliefs that opposed the beliefs of others in both details and particularities.[8]

8- In fact, there is no discrepancy between the Ahl al-Bayt’s followers and other Muslims in the basic doctrinal issues; rather, differences may be found in some secondary issues. However, the major difference is in the issue of the leadership of the Muslim society and the succession to the Holy Prophet (ṣ). The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers believe that this position of leadership must be held by those who have been designated for it through sacred texts of Almighty Allah and His Prophet (ṣ). In this respect, the Holy Prophet (ṣ) designated Imam `Alī and the eleven Imams (‘a) from his offspring as the divinely commissioned leaders of Muslims. Others believe that the Holy Prophet (ṣ) left the issue of subsequent leadership unsolved and relegated it to the Muslims so that they could put whomever they liked in this position and choose whomever they wished without reference to the religious code of law, or that the code of law has defined consultation to be the judge in this question. However, even if the latter were true in this case, true consultation was in ⇨

Naturally, if they lived in seclusion away from the sight of people and the domination of the ruling authorities, they would be able to achieve this—a matter that was originated and carried out by Christian monasticism.

Regarding the following verse of the Holy Qur'ān:

> Then We followed them up with (others of) Our messengers: We sent following in their footsteps Jesus, the son of Mary, and bestowed on him the Gospel; and We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy. But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves We did not prescribe for them: (We commanded) only the seeking for the Good Pleasure of Allah; but they did not foster it as they should have done. Yet We bestowed, on those among them who believed their (due) reward, but many of them are rebellious transgressors. (57:27)

چ ڍ ڌ ڎ ڈ ډ ڊ ژ ڑ ک ک ڪ گ گ گ گ گ گ ں ڻ ڽ ھ ہ ۂ ۀ ڻ ڈ ۋ

Some exegetes of the Holy Qur'ān have recorded that `Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd reported the following:

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fact not used by the Muslims to determine leadership. One method of consultation was used to determine the caliphate (i.e. leadership) of Abū-Bakr, another method for the caliphate of `Uthmān, and a third in choosing Imam `Alī (‘a).

كُنْتُ رَدِيفَ رَسُول الله، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْه وَآله، عَلَى حِمَارٍ، فَقَالَ: يَا بْنَ أُمِّ عَبْد، هَلْ تَدْرِي مِنْ أَيْنَ أَحْدَثَتْ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ الرَّهْبَانِيَّةَ؟ فَقُلْتُ: اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. فَقَالَ: ظَهَرَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَبَابِرَةُ بَعْدَ عِيسَى، يَعْمَلُونَ بِمَعَاصِي الله، فَغَضِبَ أَهْلُ الإِيمَان فَقَاتَلُوهُمْ، فَهُزِمَ أَهْلُ الإِيمَان ثَلاَثَ مَرَّات، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهُمْ إِلاَّ الْقَلِيلُ، فَقَالُوا: إِنْ ظَهَرْنَا لِهَؤُلاَء أَفْنَوْنَا وَلَمْ يَبْقَ لِلدِّينِ أَحَدٌ يَدْعُو إِلَيْه، فَتَعَالَوْا نَتَفَرَّقْ فِي الأَرْض إِلَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَ اللهُ النَّبِيَّ الَّذِي وَعَدَنَا بِه عِيسَى (يَعْنُونَ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْه وَآله). فَتَفَرَّقُوا فِي غِيرَان الْجِبَال وَأَحْدَثُوا رَهْبَانِيَّةً، فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ تَمَسَّكَ بِدِينِه وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَفَرَ. ثُمَّ تَلاَ هَذِه الآيَةَ: ﴿گ گ گ گ ڳ ڳ...﴾

I rode behind Allah's Messenger (ṣ) on a donkey and he said to me, "Son of Ummu-`Abd, do you know the source of monasticism that the children of Israel originated?" "Allah and His Messenger (ṣ) know best," I answered. The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then said, "Overpowered by the tyrannical people who committed acts of disobedience to Almighty Allah after Jesus ('a), the faithful believers among the children of Israel were angered by such acts and fought against these tyrants. However, the faithful believers were defeated three times and none of them survived except for a few of them. So, they thought that if they were to stand against these tyrants once more, the tyrants would exterminate them and none would survive to propagate the religion, so they suggested that they should spread out in the lands until Almighty Allah would send the Prophet that Jesus had promised (i.e. Muḥammad—peace be upon him and his Household). They fled to the caves of mountains and invented monasticism. However, some of these adhered to the original religion while others apostatized." The Holy Prophet (ṣ) then recited this holy verse: "But the monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them..."[9]

9- Shaykh al-Ṭabrisī, *Majma` al-Bayān* 9:243.

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The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) did not accept this option for their Shī`ah and followers for many reasons, some of which are as follows:

- This option is not feasible under all circumstances; in fact, it is out of the question in many cases as the followers would face a dead end and be annihilated in any case.
- This option could expose the virtuous community to deviation and straying from the right path when the period of isolation is extended, because long periods of isolation and remoteness from the sources of true guidance and knowledge open wide the door for personal inferences, inclination to individual views and resorting to heresies as in Christianity.[10]

Al-Suyūṭī, in *al-Durr al-Manthūr* 6:177, has reported the same, yet with more details and partial difference in the purport. He then mentions other narrations confirming the same meaning.

10- Ibn `Abbās is reported to have said the following:
After Prophet Jesus (‘a), kings distorted the Torah and the Gospel, but a few faithful believers remained among the public reciting the Torah and the Gospel exactly as they were revealed, so some talebearers said to the king, “The most difficult thing that we can ever bear is the insults that we receive from these people (i.e. the faithful believers). They recite the following before us: ‘If any fail to judge by the light of what God has revealed, they are no better than unbelievers.’ They recite such verses and refer to us as those intended by them. Therefore, summon them and ask them to recite these verses the same way we do and believe the same way we do.” The king summoned these faithful believers, gathered them in one place, and ordered them to choose one of two options: either to be killed or to stop reciting the original Torah and Gospel but rather the sections that had been distorted. Some of the faithful believers, however,

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- In the field of social relations, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) had already established the policy of mutual association, coexistence, and accord with other Muslims in general, and those not known for fanaticism and animosity

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asked the other party to leave them alone and made some suggestions. Some of them suggested, “You may build up a tower, put us there, and give us nothing more than food and drink. We will then stop arguing with you.” Others suggested, “Let us wander in the lands and live just like beasts, and if you find us on your lands, then you may kill us.” Others suggested, “Set up houses for us in the deserts and we will dig wells, plow lands, and plant herbs, and we will neither argue with you nor pass by you.” Each of those who made suggestions had a close friend with him. About this situation, Almighty Allah has revealed the following: “*But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them: (We commanded) only the seeking for the Good Pleasure of Allah, but that they did not foster as they should have done.*” When Almighty Allah sent Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), only a few of such people still survived. One came out of his hermitage, another returned from wandering, a third left his home, and they all believed in and gave credence to the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Referring to this, the Holy Qur'ān says, “*O you who believe! Be careful of (your duty to) Allah and believe in His Messenger: He will give you two portions of His mercy, and make for you a light with which you will walk, and forgive you, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”* (57:28) These *two portions of His mercy* are given to them because they believed in Jesus (‘a), gave credence to the Torah and the Gospel, and then believed and gave credence to the Holy Prophet (ṣ). The *light with which they walk* is the Holy Qur'ān and their adherence to the Holy Prophet (ṣ). Then, the Holy Qur'ān says, “*So that the followers of the Book may know that they do not control aught of the grace of Allah, and that grace is in Allah's hand, He gives it to whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace.* ” (57:29) (See *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 27:138, Ed. Beirut)

against the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), in particular. This is because the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) knew that their followers would be in need of other people—as has been previously discussed—and, therefore, to abide by the option of seclusion would be contradictory to this policy and squander its objective, because such isolation would inevitably leave the virtuous community besieged, suppressed, and deprived of all collective religious, social and cultural services available in society.

- The virtuous community is required to ensure the safety of the Islamic entity and the Muslim nation. They would not be able to fulfill these responsibilities except by coexisting with other Muslims and being present in their gatherings. They would only be able to play this important leading role and make an impact on the common conditions of Muslims by presenting themselves as good examples for emulation, enlightening others and demonstrating responsible and difficult positions of steadfastness.

For these reasons and many others, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) rejected the option of isolation.

2. Conflict and Clash

The second option was that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) order their followers to proclaim their beliefs, perform their devotional rituals openly among communities of other Muslims and engage in direct conflict with other Muslims regarding secondary issues of Islamic life and primary issues like Imamate and Islamic rituals.

If the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers proclaimed their beliefs and performed their rituals openly, there would inescapably be social conflict because political and

spiritual conditions would bring about intellectual discrepancies on interpretations of doctrines and transform jurisprudential issues into circles of conflict and clash. Hence, excessive fanaticism on an opinion could reach a dangerous extent and might justify the practice of persecution and become a common feature of the ruling class towards any sectarian affiliation that differed from them.[11]

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) obviously rejected this option and discommended practice of this method (of stimulating clashes and provoking conflicts) by their followers because it was inconsistent with the policy of coexistence with other Muslims and maintenance of Islamic unity against the enemies of Islam. More importantly, this option could potentially do more harm than good to the Shī`ah and followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) in particular and the Muslim community and nation in general.

As for the dangers faced by the virtuous community, the option of direct clash could bring about its extermination and eradicate the components of its social existence. As a

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11- This was one phenomenon of the politically retarded communities. Europeans passed through such retardation during the Medieval Ages because of clashes between the Catholics and the Protestants. At some stages in history, the East also passed through this phenomenon. However, Europeans are still practicing this persecution today, in another form, such as ban of *ḥijāb* (Islamic veil), banishing refugees who practice their religious rituals, marking them with a political dye—a matter unbearable for Europeans. Likewise, some governments in the Muslim world are persecuting groups of people because they practice their religious rituals, both the general ones and those that indicate their political trend, even where these rituals are not themselves political.

result, the role of this community in Islamic life would be nullified. A greater injury that could inflict the virtuous community might be that the surviving individuals of this community might be exposed to deviations in doctrine and behavior and turn into either esotericists or extremists or abandon practicing their religious duties and rituals and adopt their personal inclinations and spiritual practices.

Unfortunately, this fate was encountered by some deviating sects of Shī`ism because they forsook the policy of coexistence with other Muslims and took up isolation or embraced open conflict which led them to deviation.

Another danger might also be expected from adopting open conflict: the possibility of renunciation of religious faith and abandonment of the sect because of weakness, lack of steadfastness and devotion, or being caught between persecution, pursuit, and terrorism on the one hand and worldly seduction by the ruling authorities on the other.

As is generally understood from their traditions,[1] the Ahl

1- Among these traditions is the previously mentioned one, which is reported by `Abdullāh ibn Ya`fūr from Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a), as well as other traditions that have described *taqiyyah* as “the protection of the faithful believer” and “the armor of the faithful believer.”

For instance, Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (‘a) is reported to have said:

وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَقَرُّ لِعَيْنِي مِنَ التَّقِيَّةِ؟ إِنَّ التَّقِيَّةَ جُنَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

Is there anything more delightful to me than *taqiyyah*? Verily, *taqiyyah* is the protection of the faithful believer.

(*See* Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:460, H. 4.)

It has been authentically narrated that Imam Ja`far al-Ṣādiq (‘a) has said:

التَّقِيَّةُ تِرْسُ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

Taqiyyah is the armor of the faithful believer.

⇨

al-Bayt (‘a), having analyzed the political and social conditions, believed that open conflict would cause the aforesaid injuries to the virtuous community. As a result, they rejected this option.

The dangers of these two options have been also mentioned in traditions concerning the history of Christianity and the invention of monasticism.[1]

التَّقِيَّةُ حِرْزُ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

لاَ إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لاَ تَقِيَّةَ لَهُ.

Taqiyyah is the shelter of the faithful believer.
Faithless is he who does not practice *taqiyyah*.

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَقَعُ إِلَيْهِ الْحَدِيثُ مِنْ حَدِيثِنَا فَيَدِينُ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِهِ فِيمَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهُ، فَيَكُونُ لَهُ عِزّاً فِي الدُّنْيَا وَنُوراً فِي الآخِرَةِ. وَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَقَعُ إِلَيْهِ الْحَدِيثُ مِنْ حَدِيثِنَا فَيُذِيعُهُ، فَيَكُونُ لَهُ ذُلاًّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَيَنْزِعُ اللهُ ذَلِكَ النُّورَ مِنْهُ.

One of our discourses may fall in the hands of a servant (of Almighty Allah) who consequently adopts it as a devotional act by which he worships Almighty Allah confidentially such that it grants him dignity in this worldly life and light in the Hereafter. Another servant may receive one of our discourses, and he exposes it such that it causes him humility in this worldly life and Almighty Allah divests him of the light.

(*See* Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:460, H. 6 as quoted from Shaykh al-Kulaynī’s *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*.)

1- `Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd has reported the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as saying,

“Those who were before us separated into seventy one sects; only three of them were redeemed while all the others were exposed to perdition. One of these three sects faced the kings and fought against them, following the true religion of Almighty Allah and the faith of Jesus, son of Mary—peace be upon him. As a result, they were killed by the kings. The other sect were too powerless to fight the kings, so they lived ⇨

As for harm done to Muslims in general, the option of open conflict gives rise to disorder, destabilization of Muslim society, and disunity. This weakens the general entity of Islam, especially when the virtuous community can withstand and continue in a state of equality in power. Such being the case, the external enemies of Islam and the internal opportunists and interest-seekers will unquestionably make use of this conflict at the expense of Islam. This result can be noticed in the conditions that Muslims experienced in various ages of their history.[1] Because of this and due to their anticipation of these injuries, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) adopted positions of responsibility towards maintaining the unity of Islam and

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among their peoples inviting them to the religion of Almighty Allah and the faith of Jesus, son of Mary—peace be upon him. Consequently, the kings slew them and cut them up with saws. The third sect were also too weak to face the kings or to live among their peoples and invite them to the religion of Almighty Allah and the faith of Jesus, son of Mary—peace be upon him. Therefore, they fled to the wilderness and mountains and practiced monasticism therein. This is the interpretation of Almighty Allah’s saying: “*But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them*” means that they did not do it except to seek Almighty Allah’s pleasure. “*But that they did not foster it as they should have done*” means that the next generations of those monks did not continue the practice as it should have been performed. “*So, We gave to those of them who believed their reward*.” These are those who believed in and gave credence to me. “*And most of them are transgressors*.” The transgressors among them are those who denied me.”

(*See Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* 27:138-139, Ed. Beirut)

1- Clashes between Muslim sects took place in many periods throughout history, such as the clashes between the Ḥamdānites and the Ayyūbids in Syria, the Fāṭimids and the Ayyūbids in Egypt, the Umayyads and the `Alawids in the west of the Arab lands, and some Ismā`īlis and `Abbāsids in Iran.

protecting the Muslim nation.

3. Taqiyyah and forbearance

The third option is to adopt *taqiyyah* (pious dissimulation) and to conceal the secondary issues of one's faith when such issues reveal ones political identity or arouse harsh reactions under the circumstances of fanaticism and persecution and also by performing the sectarian rituals in such a suitable form that upholds the genuineness of these rituals and, at the same time, corresponds with the general outlook of the Muslim nation so as to avoid persecution, terrorism or irritation due to an unjust or wrong interpretation of rituals and behavior.

This was the option that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) preferred when facing the difficult circumstances that they and their followers had to encounter.

Evidently, the adoption of *taqiyyah* was *not* on account of a psychological response to pressures such as fear and cowardice or feelings of political and spiritual defeat. This fact has been declared by Imam `Alī al-Hādī (‘a) in the famous *ziyārah* of al-Ghadīr when he explains the situation of Imam `Alī, the Commander of the Faithful (‘a) when he kept silent on the usurpation of his right of leadership. As a matter of fact, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their Shī`ah are the true people of self-sacrifice, struggle, steadfastness and persistence, and they educated their followers on these lines and foretold the coming tribulations and ordeals.[1] In fact,

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1- Imam `Alī Amīr al-Mu'minīn (‘a) is reported to have said:

مَنْ أَحَبَّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ فَلْيَسْتَعِدَّ لِلْفَقْرِ جِلْبَاباً.

Whoever loves us must readily dress himself with poverty.

(*Nahj al-Balāghah*, Aphorism No. 112)

لَوْ أَحَبَّنِي جَبَلٌ لَتَهَافَتَ.

Even if a mountain loves me, it will definitely collapse.

⇨

they adopted this option on the strength of a clear objective attitude towards both political life and social struggle and the consequences of the various options. They adopted this option on the basis of their accurate evaluation of the common advantages and disadvantages, the priorities of Islam that controlled social progress and the principle of placing the most important before the less important of these priorities. Thus, the option of *taqiyyah* has come to express the intellectual and political line of action that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) practiced to protect the virtuous community and achieve the major goals of Islam.

The following points are indications of this understanding of *taqiyyah* and adoption of this option:

- The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) presented the principle of *taqiyyah* as the religion itself (“*taqiyyah* is my religion and that of my fathers”), as the true faith (“faithless is he who does not practice *taqiyyah”*), and as light on the Day of Resurrection.
- Preventive measures and precautions against anticipated harm and danger are naturally generated by human beings. The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) warned their followers against treating situations of precaution casually and encouraged them to adopt and practice *taqiyyah*, threatening those who abandoned it with punishment in this world and in the Hereafter, as well as many other instructions that are markedly cited in the traditions on *taqiyyah*.[1]

(*Ibid,* No. 112)
Confirming this fact, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) are reported to have stated that ordeals and tribulations increase man’s nearness to Almighty Allah.
1- For instance, Abū-Baṣīr is reported to have heard Imam al- ⇨

The one and only acceptable interpretation of such warnings and encouragements is the following:

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) educated their followers to reject injustice and persecution, be persistent, steadfast and sacrificing for the sake of the truth, endure all kinds of torture, ordeals, and pain for the sake of the principles of faith, and fulfill their covenants and pledges. By doing this they faced serious difficulties in controlling the actual implementation of these requirements, building the virtuous community and undertaking the major responsibilities towards Islam as a political entity and nation. As a result, they had to establish instruction on adherence to one’s faith, principles, and spirituality that needed to run parallel to training in high moral and spiritual standards of self-sacrifice, limitless giving, and readiness for martyrdom.

In the light of the above, *taqiyyah* is a security measure that guarantees protection of the virtuous community against persecution. In addition, *taqiyyah* has another educational, social and political significance that assures spiritual and psychological equilibrium for the virtuous community in their treatment of various events and circumstances and creates an

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Bāqir (‘a) saying:

لاَ خَيْرَ فِي مَنْ لاَ تَقِيَّةَ لَهُ. وَلَقَدْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ: ﴿ٻ ٻ ٻ ٻ ﴾ وَمَا سَرَقُوا.

Worthless is he who does not hold *taqiyyah*. (Prophet) Joseph (‘a) said (to his brothers), “O caravan! You are most surely thieves. (12:70)” In fact, they had not stolen anything (on that occasion).

Dāwūd has reported Imam `Alī al-Hādī (‘a) as saying to him:

لَوْ قُلْتُ إنَّ تَارِكَ التَّقِيَّةِ كَتَارِكِ الصَّلاَةِ لَكُنْتُ صَادِقاً.

Even if I say that the deserter of *taqiyyah* is the same as the deserter of (obligatory) prayer, I am surely honest.

Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:466, H. 26.

opportunity for the community to contribute to the process of self-construction and social change.

Confirming this fact, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) did not restrict *taqiyyah* to only situations of danger and anticipated harm; in fact, it was far more comprehensive.[1]

Limits of Taqiyyah

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) did not leave the authorization for *taqiyyah* without limits; rather, they restricted it and set limits for it. The restrictions are that *taqiyyah* must not be practiced when it injures other believers, causes bloodshed or exposes others to dangers. In this respect, Imam al-Bāqir (‘a) says, according to a valid (*mu`tabar*) tradition:

إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ التَّقِيَّةُ لِيُحْقَنَ بِهَا الدَّمُ. فَإِذَا بَلَغَ الدَّمَ فَلَيْسَ تَقِيَّةً.

Taqiyyah has been determined in order to save blood from being shed. Hence, when the matter reaches bloodshed, *taqiyyah* becomes null.[2]

Likewise, *taqiyyah* is not acceptable in situations when its practice leads to being lax in supporting Islam and Muslims and when it violates the regulations and laws of striving for Almighty Allah’s sake (*jihād fī sabīlillāh*). On such occasions, *taqiyyah* becomes unlawful and unjustifiable.

According to a validly reported tradition, Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) is reported to have said:

لَمْ تَبْقَ الأَرْضُ إِلاَّ وَفِيهَا مِنَّا

The earth will not exist unless there is a knowledgeable one from

1- In another section, we will talk about the principle of *taqiyyah* along with its various aspects to make this idea more clear.

2- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:483, H. 1.

عَالِمٌ، فَإِذَا بَلَغَت التَّقيَّةُ الدَّمَ فَلاَ تَقيَّـةَ. وَأَيْـمُ الله، لَـوْ دُعيـتُمْ لَتَنْـصُرُونَا قُلْـتُمْ: لاَ نَفْعَـلُ، إِنَّمَـا نَتَّقـي! وَلَكَانَـت التَّقيَّـةُ أَحَـبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِـنْ آبَـائِكُمْ وَأُمَّهَـاتِكُمْ، وَلَوْ قَدْ قَامَ الْقَائِمُ مَا إِحْتَاجَ إِلَى مُسَاءَلَتِكُمْ عَنْ ذَلِكَ، وَلأَقَامَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ النِّفَاقِ حَدَّ الله.

us (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a)) living on it. When *taqiyyah* reaches bloodshed, then it becomes null. By Allah I take an oath that when you are called to support us, you will not respond, claiming that you are practicing *taqiyyah*! And *taqiyyah* will then be dearer to you than your fathers and mothers. When the Qā’im (Imam Mahdi) comes (to undertake the mission)—and he shall unquestionably come—he will not need to ask you about this. He shall execute divine punishment on many hypocrites among you.[1]

According to another tradition, the Imam of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) presents a general rule about the meaning of *taqiyyah* which is to save oneself from harm provided that such act will not bring about corruption in the religion or faith. He thus says:

لِلتَّقيَّـةِ مَوَاضِـعُ مَـنْ أَزَالَهَـا عَـنْ مَوَاضِعِهَا لَمْ تَسْتَقِمْ لَهُ، وَتَفْـسِيرُ مَا يُتَّقَى مِثْلُ أَنْ يَكُونَ قَوْمُ سُوءٍ ظَـاهِراً حُكْمُهُـمْ وَفِعْلُهُـمْ عَلَـى غَيْرِ حُكْـمِ الْحَـقِّ وَفِعْلِـه. فَكُـلُّ شَـيْءٍ يَعْمَـلُ الْمُـؤْمِنُ بَيْـنَهُمْ لِمَكَانِ التَّقيَّةِ مِمَّا لاَ يُؤَدِّي إِلَـى

Taqiyyah is permitted under certain situations. Whoever uses it in other than these situations, *taqiyyah* will not be accepted from him. An example of an acceptable situation under which *taqiyyah* may be adopted is that a believer may have to deal with people whose rules and deeds are evidently opposite to the true laws and deeds; hence, anything that is practiced by that believer in the presence of these people on the basis of *taqiyyah* is allowable provided that his acts do not

1- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:483, H. 2.

cause corruption of his religion.[1] الْفَسَادِ فِي الدِّينِ فَإِنَّهُ جَائِزٌ.

As has been previously cited, the Holy Imams (‘a) instructed their followers to patiently bear all suffering and sacrifice their souls and properties for the sake of their religion, or faith.[2]

All such traditions confirm that *taqiyyah* is a practical means of security within the limits of the supreme interests of Islam and survival of the virtuous community. It is not blanket permission to flee reality or escape one’s enemy.

1- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:469, H. 6.
2- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:451, H. 2 & 139, H. 2.

CONCEALMENT OF SECRETS

In addition to *taqiyyah*, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) founded another principle to ensure the security of the virtuous community. This principle includes “concealment of secrets”, “preservation of secrets”, “avoidance of divulging secrets”, and “evasion of revealing secrets to enemies”, whether the enemies were anti-Shī`ah tyrants and spiteful opponents, waylaying hypocrites and opportunists, or fickle acquiescent individuals among the public who incline with every wind.

This principle has been confused with *taqiyyah* to a great extent. Some narrations give the name of *taqiyyah* to both precaution and dissimulation on the one hand and concealment of secrets on the other and regard divulgence of secrets violation of *taqiyyah*. In view of this probable confusion, we must define the subject matter of ‘concealment of secrets’ as a security measure of the virtuous community which is adopted by all human societies that intend to protect their individuals from enemies and maintain their solidarity and capability to perform. Divulgence of secrets is usually considered the gravest danger that may be encountered by any community that is exposed to persecution and extermination.

Books of ethics have dealt with slips of the tongue and the momentous perils that such blunders cause in the social life of man and in man’s relationship with Almighty Allah, as well as the many sins, flaws, misfortunes, and injuries that arise from such slips.

As for this security measure, it deals with slips of the tongue from another angle—the divulgence and disclosure of secrets that expose the virtuous community to dangers and reveal its activities, inclinations, size, and the identies

of individuals, endangering their lives.

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), their Shī`ah, and their followers stood for a “community” of Muslims that had its own particularities with doctrinal, intellectual, and cultural components in addition to confidential political inclinations. This community spread over various regions of the Muslim world and lived within other Muslim communities under their ruling regimes.

The tyrannical ruling authorities used to consider the Shī`ite community to be the opposition. As a result, they feared and harassed its people because they realized its influence, vitality and adherence to the leadership of the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a)—those most rightful of leadership of the Muslim society and the most accepted and approved group by all Muslims.

Incitement of People against the Shī`ah

The community of the Shī`ah were exposed to not only harassment and persecution but also denouncement and defamation of its doctrines, activities and purposes in Islamic life with the aim of isolating and circumscribing it inside the Muslim nation and then putting it under pressure by inciting others against it.

The political aspect most perturbed the enemies of the Shī`ah—i.e., the tyrannical rulers, spiteful opponents, and anti-Shī`ah factions—and was the real reason for alliance against the Shī`ah. The sectarian affiliation of the individuals of the virtuous community was also important to the enemies of the Shī`ah, and its importance increased greatly when this affiliation revealed the political inclinations of individuals of the community.

The matter was somewhat different in the mind of the common milieus of the Muslims. They were provoked by

the doctrinal aspect of the virtuous community (owing to their naive understanding of Islam and having been indoctrinated by the ruling authorities and deviant scholars with fanaticism and ill will) and were not concerned about political affiliation as much as the secondary and trivial details of doctrines. They insensitively rejected every trivial item that violated peripheral issues of doctrinal views and requisites prescribed by the ruling authorities.

Using their cadre, the ruling authorities exerted all possible efforts to keep the nation from realizing the truth appertaining to not only the corrupt deeds and manners of the tyrannical rulers but also the accurate political affiliations of other political trends. Moreover, they tried to incite and provoke the public against these trends, using all possible methods and means.

Instead of educating the Muslim nation in investigation, seeking knowledge, establishing freedom in scientific discourse and practical experimentation within the necessary postulates of its faith, the ruling authorities fed the public with fanaticism in personal views, encouraging accusation with "atheism," "infidelity," "apostasy from Islam," and "fragmenting the congregation of Muslims" towards anybody who disagreed with them on even a secondary or trivial issue, demanded his rights, or stood against the tyrannical and oppressive rulers, rejecting their injustice and monopoly.

Describing this method of indoctrination used on Muslims by tyrants, Imam al-Ṣādiq (ʻa) said:

إنَّ بَني أُمَيَّةَ أَطْلَقُوا لِلنَّاسِ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُوا الإِيمَانَ، وَلَمْ يُطْلِقُوا لَهُمْ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُوا الشِّرْكَ، حَتَّى إِذَا حَمَلُوهُمْ عَلَيْهِ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا ذَلِكَ.

The children of Umayyah[22] gave people freedom to learn faith, but they did not permit them to learn about polytheism such that if they were to lead them to polytheism, the people would not realize it.[23]

For this reason, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) determined that *taqiyyah* alone did not suffice; rather, they asked their followers not to reveal their beliefs and agitate others by practicing their rituals openly. They knew that such acts might lead to their isolation from Muslim society and political, social and economic siege. Of course, it was possible that the open practice of their rituals might lessen the extent of pressure from others; nevertheless, the Holy Imams’ (‘a) instruction was to avoid such acts.

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) paid addiitonal attention to an even more important issue: they ordered their followers to desist in arguing about political and religious issues, divulging private information, and showing feelings and sentiments[24] that revealed their

22- Rulers of the Umayyad dynasty.

23- Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* 2:415, H. 1.

24- The Shī`ite community passed by such extremely critical times at which to merely mention Imam `Alī and Lady Fāṭimah—peace be upon them—admirably had political significance. A tradition reads that Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَذِكْرَ عَلِيٍّ وَفَاطِمَةَ، عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلاَمُ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَبْغَضَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ عَلِيٍّ وَفَاطِمَةَ، عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلاَمُ.

Beware of mentioning `Alī and Fāṭimah! The most spiteful thing to people has become reference to `Alī and Fāṭimah—Peace be upon them.

⇨

political and sectarian affiliation. The followers were also ordered not to reveal any information about the extent of influence and impact of the virtuous community and the nature of their political attitudes to the ruling regime or other oppositionist political movements that the community adopted because divulgence of such information could endanger the existence of the virtuous community and be used by enemies to pursue or annihilate its members.

The concealment of secrets and suppression of information about the reality of the virtuous community was, at some stage its most important security issue. It required a high degree of self-restraint and control over the tongue. The tyrannical rulers were extremely sensitive about their interests and felt threatened by the genuineness, truth and faithfulness of the individuals of the virtuous community as well as their willingness to sacrifice their lives; the plain, true concepts that they used to proffer to the Muslim nation; and the sound logic they used to elucidate these concepts.

(Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:486, H. 2.)

It goes without saying that those people who cannot bear the mention of `Alī and Fāṭimah (‘a) are quite different from those who proudly own their love for `Alī and Fāṭimah—peace be upon them.

Ibn Ḥajar, mentioning the biography of `Alī ibn Rabāḥ, has recorded that the Umayyad ruling authorities used to kill any newborn who had been given the name of `Alī. Therefore, Rabāḥ (the father of the biographee) had to change his son’s name into `Ulay instead of `Alī. `Alī ibn Rabāḥ would be angry if anyone called him `Alī. He once said, “I do not release from religious responsibility any one who calls me `Alī, because my name is `Ulay. (See Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* 7:280-281, Ed. Dār al-Fikr)

Al-Shāfi`ī referred to this same trend in his poetic verses.

Formulas of Warning

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) used many formulas and modes of warning, enlightenment, and education to express the crucial importance of this measure in ensuring the security of the virtuous community.

According to a validly reported tradition, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī-Naṣr has reported that he, once asked Imam al-Riḍā (‘a) about a definite issue, but the Imam (‘a) insistently refused to answer. He then said:

لَوْ أَعْطَيْنَاكُمْ كُلَّ مَا تُرِيدُونَ كَانَ شَرّاً لَكُمْ، وَأُخِذَ بِرَقَبَةِ صَاحِبِ هَذَا الأَمْرِ.

If we give you everything you want, this will definitely be bad for you; and this will cause problems for the person involved.

Abū-Ja`far (‘a) used to say:

وَلاَيَةُ اللهِ أَسَرَّهَا إِلَى جَبْرَئِيلَ، وَأَسَرَّهَا جَبْرَئِيلُ إِلَى مُحَمَّد، وَأَسَرَّهَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَى عَلِيٍّ، وَأَسَرَّهَا عَلِيٌّ إِلَى مَنْ شَاءَ اللهُ. ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تُذِيعُونَ ذَلِكَ! مَنِ الَّذِي أَمْسَكَ حَرْفاً سَمِعَهُ؟

The secrets of Allah were confidentially passed on to Archangel Gabriel who confidentially passed them on to (Prophet) Muḥammad (ṣ) who confidentially passed them on to `Alī (‘a) who confidentially passed them on to whom Almighty Allah willed to know. Now, you are divulging it! Which one of you can withhold a single letter of what he has heard?

Abū-Ja`far (‘a) said:

فِي حِكْمَةِ آلِ دَاوُدَ: يَنْبَغِي لِلْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَكُونَ مَالِكاً لِنَفْسِهِ، مُقْبِلاً عَلَى شَأْنِهِ، عَارِفاً بِأَهْلِ

The following is written in the wise book of (Prophet) David’s household: A true Muslim (i.e. one submissive to the religion) is required to be self-possessed, engaged with his own affairs, and

زَمَانــه. فَــاتَّقُوا اللهَ وَلاَ تُــذيعُوا حَديثَنَا. فَلَوْلاَ أَنَّ اللهَ يُـدَافِعُ عَـنْ أَوْلِيَائــه وَيَنْــتَقِمُ لأَوْلِيَائــه مــنْ أَعْدَائه، أَمَـا رَأَيْـتَ مَـا صَـنَعَ اللهُ بآل بَرْمَـكَ وَمَـا إِنْـتَقَمَ اللهُ لأَبـي الْحَسَن؟ وَقَدْ كَانَ بَنُـو الأَشْـعَث عَلَـى خَطَـرٍ عَظـيمٍ، فَـدَفَعَ اللهُ عَـنْهُمْ بـوِلاَيَتهمْ لأَبـي الْحَـسَن. وَأَنْــتُمْ بــالْعرَاق تَــرَوْنَ أَعْمَــالَ هَـؤُلاَء الْفَرَاعنَـة وَمَـا أَمْهَـلَ اللهُ لَهُــمْ، فَعَلَـيْكُمْ بتَقْــوَى الله، وَلاَ تُغَرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا، وَلاَ تَغْتَرُّوا بمَـنْ قَـدْ أُمْهـلَ قَـبْلَكُمْ، فَكَـأَنَّ الأَمْرَ قَدْ وَصَلَ إِلَيْكُمْ.

aware of the people of his time. So, fear Almighty Allah and never announce our discourses. (What has saved you from the result of such divulgence is that) Almighty Allah defends His saints and takes revenge from His enemies for His saints. Have you not seen what Almighty Allah did to the Barmak and how he retaliated for Abu'l-Ḥasan? The family of al-Ash`ath were about to encounter a great catastrophe, but Almighty Allah saved them from it because of their allegiance to Abu'l-Ḥasan. In Iraq, you are witnessing the evil deeds of these tyrants and the respite that Almighty Allah is granting them. So, fear Almighty Allah, do not be seduced by this worldly life, and do not be deceived by the bygone ones whom Almighty Allah had granted respite. I foresee this matter shall soon be in your hands.[25]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a), according to another authentic report, demonstrated the worldly damage of divulgence of secrets, saying:

مَن إِسْتَفْتَحَ نَهَارَهُ بإِذَاعَة سرِّنَا سَـلَّطَ اللهُ عَلَيْـه حَـرَّ الْحَديـد وَضيقَ الْمَجَالس.

Whoever begins his day with divulgence of our secrets, Almighty Allah will expose him to the heat of iron and narrow sitting-places.[26]

25- Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* 2:224-225, H. 10.
26- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:493, H. 2.

Sometimes, warnings against divulgence of secrets reached such a great extent of obligation that Imam Abu'l-Ḥasan (‘a), as reported by `Uthmān ibn `Īsā, said:

إِنْ كَانَ فِي يَدِكَ هَذِه شَيْءٌ، فَإِنِ إِسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ لاَ تَعْلَمَ هَذِه (الأُخْرَى) فَافْعَلْ.

If there is something is your hand, make sure that as far as is possible the other hand does not know about it.

In his presence, some people talked about divulgence of secrets, so the Imam (‘a) instructed:

إِحْفَظْ لِسَانَكَ تَعِزَّ، وَلاَ تُمَكِّنِ النَّاسَ مِنْ قِيَادِ رَقَبَتِكَ فَتُذَلَّ.

Withhold your tongue so as to attain dignity, and do not give people a chance to have a hold over your neck, lest you become humiliated.[27]

According to another validly reported tradition, the peril of divulging a secret is as fateful as killing the prophets. Abū-Baṣīr has reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) as saying:

﴿وَيَقْتُلُونَ﴾ أَمَا وَاللهِ مَا قَتَلُوهُمْ بِأَسْيَافِهِمْ، وَلَكِنْ أَذَاعُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَفْشَوْا سِرَّهُمْ فَقُتِلُوا.

Almighty Allah says (in the Holy Qur'ān), “And they slay the prophets unjustly. (3:21)” By Allah I swear, they did not slay the prophets with swords; rather, they divulged their secrets and announced their activities and, as a result, prophets were slain.[28]

Through an authentic chain of authority, Sulaymān ibn Khālid has reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) as saying to him:

27- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:493, S. 34 (Prohibition of divulgence of the right when danger is anticipated), H. 5.

28- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:494, S. 34, H. 7.

يَا سُلَيْمَانُ، إِنَّكُمْ عَلَى دِينٍ مَنْ كَتَمَهُ أَعَزَّهُ اللهُ، وَمَنْ أَذَاعَهُ أَذَلَّهُ اللهُ.

O Sulaymān, you (i.e. the Shī`ah) are following a faith that whoever conceals it will be honored by Almighty Allah, but whoever exposes it will be humiliated by Him.[29]

When one of the Holy Imams (‘a) observed an occurrence of rushing into the adoption of certain political attitudes or impulsive rashness to move and draw the attention of the public to the love for the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), the Imam would say the following, as reported from Imam `Alī Zayn al-`Ābidīn (‘a):

وَدِدْتُ، وَاللهِ، لَوِ إِفْتَدَيْتُ خِصْلَتَيْنِ فِي الشِّيعَةِ لَنَا بِبَعْضِ لَحْمِ سَاعِدِي: النَّزَقَ وَقِلَّةَ الْكِتْمَانِ.

By Allah, I wish I could give as ransom some of my arm’s flesh for two traits that our Shī`ah must get rid of: recklessness and lack of concealment (of our secrets).[30]

According to another tradition, Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) assigns the concealment of secrets such an important role that it is related to faith, belief, loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the undertaking of the mission of propagation.

`Abd al-A`lā has reported that he heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (ṣ) saying:

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ إِحْتِمَالَ أَمْرِنَا التَّصْدِيقُ لَهُ وَالْقَبُولُ فَقَطْ، مِنْ إِحْتِمَالِ أَمْرِنَا سَتْرُهُ وَصِيَانَتُهُ عَنْ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ.

To abide by our Issue is not merely to believe and accept it. Within the matters of abiding by our Issue is to hide it and to protect it from everybody except its people. So, convey

29- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:484, S. 32 (Obligation of concealing the religion of Allah from other than its people along with *taqiyyah*), H. 1.
30- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:484, S. 32, H. 2.

فَاقْرَأْهُمُ السَّلاَمَ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ: رَحِمَ اللهُ عَبْداً إجْتَرَّ مَوَدَّةَ النَّاسِ إلَيْنَا. حَدِّثُوهُمْ بِمَا يَعْرِفُونَ، وَاسْتُرُوا عَنْهُمْ مَا يُنْكِرُونَ.

my greeting to them (i.e. the Shī`ah) and say to them: May Allah have mercy upon (His) servant who attracts people's love toward us. Say to those who understand and conceal from those who reject.[31]

According to another tradition, Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) sternly renounces those who divulge secrets and violate instructions, exposing their Imam and their companions to peril and perdition. The Imam (‘a) expressed his rage and denounced them.

Al-Qāsim, the partner of al-Faḍl, who was a very honest man, has reported that he heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) saying:

خَلْقٌ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ يَشْهَرُونَنَا وَيَشْهَرُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ. أُولَئِكَ لَيْسُوا مِنَّا وَلاَ نَحْنُ مِنْهُمْ. أَنْطِقُ فَأُدَارِي وَأَسْتُرُ فَيَهْتِكُونَ سِتْرِي! هَتَكَ اللهُ سُتُورَهُمْ. يَقُولُونَ: إِمَامٌ. وَاللهِ مَا أَنَا بِإِمَامٍ إِلاَّ مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي. فَأَمَّا مَنْ عَصَانِي فَلَسْتُ لَهُمْ بِإِمَامٍ. لِمَ يُقَلْقِلُونَ بِإِسْمِي؟ أَلاَ يَكُفُّونَ إِسْمِي عَنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ. فَوَاللهِ لاَ يَجْمَعُنِيَ اللهُ وَإِيَّاهُمْ فِي دَارٍ.

Some individuals are exposing themselves and us in the mosque. They are not part of us nor are we part of them. When I speak, I try to hide my beliefs intentionally and when I keep matters covered, such people unmask me! May Allah lay them bare! They claim that I am their Imam. By Allah I swear, I am exclusively the Imam of him who obeys me. As for him who disobeys me, I am not his Imam. Why are they chattering using my name? Can't they take my name out of their mouths? By Allah, He shall never join them to me in the abode.[32]

31- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:484, S. 32, H. 5.
32- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:484, S. 33 (Prohibition of saying the names of al-Mahdī and the other Imams), H. 1.

PRESENCE IN THE RULING SYSTEM

The third measure that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) took in the security system of the virtuous community was having a relative and limited presence in the unjust ruling regimes in order to apprise the virtuous community of the situations, plans, policies and suppressive or corruptive procedures of these ruling authorities, so that the virtuous community might take heed, avoid and observe their movements on the one hand and frustrate and fend off the harms that might afflict them and the Muslims on the other.

As previously cited, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) firmly prohibited their followers from any kind of cooperation with the unjust authorities—whether in offering general services that might contribute to strengthening their authority, result in any form of approval of their rule, or help them in wrongdoing and oppressive acts—and from accepting offices related to authority and government.

Abū-Baṣīr has reported that he asked Imam al-Bāqir (‘a) about the legality of occupying offices in the ruling regimes of unjust rulers. The Imam (‘a) answered:

يَـا أَبَـا مُحَمَّـد، لاَ وَلاَ مُـدَّةُ قَلَـمٍ. إِنَّ أَحَـدَهُمْ لاَ يُـصيبُ مِنْ دُنْيَـاهُمْ شَـيْئاً إِلاَّ أَصَـابُوا مِنْ دِينِه مِثْلَهُ.

O Abū-Muḥammad, never help them in any matter even if it be as trivial as handing them a pen. No one can obtain any worldly interests from them without loss of as large a part of his faith as the amount of that interest.[33]

33- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 12:129, H. 5; Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 5:107, H. 5.

Writing the life account of Ṣafwān al-Jammāl, al-Kashshī (in his book of biography) records the following narration:

Ṣafwān said: One day, while I was paying a visit to Imam al-Kāẓim (‘a), he said to me, “Ṣafwān, all your manners are acceptable and all right except one thing.”

“May Allah accept me as ransom for you! What is that?” I wondered.

The Imam (‘a) answered, “It is that you hire camels for this man. (i.e. the ruler Hārūn)”

Explaining my situation, I said, “I swear by Allah that I have never hired him a camel for luxurious, reckless, immoral or hunting purposes. Rather, I have hired out camels for him so that he can use them as riding animals on his way to Makkah. Moreover, I do not take charge of the camels myself, but employ some of my servants to do so.”

The Imam (‘a) asked, “Do they (i.e. the ruling authorities) pay you for this hiring?”

“Yes, they do,” I answered.

The Imam (‘a) asked further, “Do you wish that they would survive to pay you?”

“Yes, I do,” I answered.

The Imam (‘a) stated:

“Then, he who wishes survival for them is definitely one of them, and he who belongs to them will definitely be in Hellfire.”

مَنْ أَحَبَّ بَقَاءَهُمْ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْهُمْ كَانَ وَرَدَ النَّارَ.

Immediately after that, I sold all my camels.

When Hārūn was informed about this, he summoned me and said, “Ṣafwān, I have been informed that you sold your camels.”

"Yes, I did," I answered.

"Why?" he asked.

"I have become too aged to work, and my servant cannot perform the necessary jobs," I answered.

Hārūn insisted, "No! I know him who advised you to do so. This is the advice of Mūsā ibn Ja`far."

"What connects this to Mūsā ibn Ja`far?" I denied.

Hārūn said, "Leave this claim! By Allah I swear, I would kill you had it not been for your good conduct with us!"[34]

In spite of this stern prohibition, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) excluded certain situations for which they allowed working with the unjust ruling authorities and accepting offices and jobs in their governments. The most important of these were offices that served two essential services to the virtuous community: (1) warding off harm and injury to the community, and (2) provision of services and facilities, including defence of the rights of the virtuous community and paying them their entitlements.

In this respect, `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn is reported to have said that Imam Mūsā ibn Ja`far al-Kāẓim ('a) said to him:

إِنَّ لله، تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى، مَعَ السُّلْطَان أَوْلِيَاءَ يَدْفَعُ بِهِمْ عَنْ أَوْلِيَائِه.

Verily, among the company of the oppressors, Almighty Allah has some intimate servants by whom He repels (harm) from other cherished servants.[35]

34- Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhū'l-Faqīh* 4:436; al-Kashshī, *Ikhtiyār Ma`rifat al-Rijāl* 2:740; al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah*1 7:182, H.22305.

35- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 12:139, H. 1.

Ziyād ibn Abū-Sulmā is reported to have related the following:

> One day, I visited Abū'l-Ḥasan (Imam) Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʻa) who asked me, "Ziyād, do you work with the ruling authority?"
>
> "Yes, I do," I answered.
>
> The Imam (ʻa) asked, "Why is that?"
>
> I answered, "I have a sense of honor, dependants to provide, and no other resource."
>
> The Imam (ʻa) commented, "Ziyād, if I were to fall from a high place and break to pieces, it would be more preferable to me than holding an office for any of these (unjust authorities) or even more preferable than being treading on like their rugs—except for one circumstance. Do you know what it is?"
>
> I answered, "No, I do not. May Allah accept me as your ransom!"
>
> The Imam (ʻa) explained:

"Except in situations of relieving the anguish of a believer by releasing him from captivity or helping him settle his debts. O Ziyād, the lightest penalty that Almighty Allah places upon one that holds an office with unjust authorities is that He covers him with a canopy of fire until He finishes settling accounts with all other creatures. O Ziyād, if you have held any of their offices, then you must behave kindly with your brethren-in-faith as compensation for holding that office—an act for an act."[36]

إِلاَّ لِتَفْرِيجِ كُرْبَةٍ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ، أَوْ فَكِّ أَسْرِه، أَوْ قَضَاءِ دَيْنِه. يَا زِيَادُ، إِنَّ أَهْوَنَ مَا يَصْنَعُ اللهُ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ بِمَنْ تَوَلَّى لَهُمْ عَمَلاً أَنْ يَضْرِبَ عَلَيْهِ سُرَادِقَ مِنْ نَارٍ إِلَى أَنْ يَفْرُغَ اللهُ مِنْ حِسَابِ الْخَلاَئِقِ. يَا زِيَادُ، فَإِنْ وُلِّيتَ شَيْئاً مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ فَأَحْسِنْ إِلَى إِخْوَانِكَ، فَوَاحِدَةٌ بِوَاحِدَةٍ.

36- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 12:140, H. 9; Shaykh ⇨

As is understood from some traditions, holding an office in governments of unjust authorities requires restricted permission given by the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) or by the religious legal authority who runs the affairs of the virtuous community in order that permission might be disallowed in cases of personal gain or taking on prohibited jobs that would expose individuals of the virtuous community to deviation.

According to a valid chain of authority, al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Anbārī[37] has reported the following:

For fourteen years, I wrote letters to Imam Abū’l-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (‘a) seeking his permission to hold a governmental office in the regime of the unjust rulers. In the last letter, I mentioned that I feared my neck would be cut off as the ruling authority threatened me, saying, “You are Rāfiḍī and you are refusing this office only for this reason!”

The answer of Imam al-Riḍā (‘a) was the following:

فَهِمْتُ كِتَابَكَ وَمَا ذَكَرْتَ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ، فَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ إِذَا وَلِيتَ عَمَلَكَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللهِ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه، ثُمَّ تُصَيِّرُ أَعْوَانَكَ وَكُتَّابَكَ أَهْلَ مِلَّتِكَ، وَإِذَا صَارَ إِلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ وَاسَيْتَ بِهِ فُقَرَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَتَّى تَكُونَ وَاحِداً مِنْهُمْ، كَانَ ذَا بِذَا، وَإِلاَّ فَلاَ.

I understand your letter and I am conscious of your fear for your life. If you know that in holding this office you will do what you have been ordered by the Messenger of Allah (ṣ), and will chose your brethren-in-faith to be your agents and clerks, and you share whatever you gain with the poor faithfuls as if you are one of them, then you may hold it under these conditions; otherwise, I do not permit it.[38]

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al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* 5:110, H. 1.

37- Al-Ardabīlī has asserted that this person is al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Kindī.

38- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 12:145, H. 1.

Sometimes, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) would direct these persons in their jobs and confirmed the importance of keeping their doctrinal identities undisclosed.

Ibn Sinān has reported that Hārūn al-Rashīd, the `Abbāsid ruler, gifted `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn some garments as an expression of respect. Among these, there was a black silk garment embedded with much gold. `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn, in turn, sent most of these, including this silk garment, to Imam Abū’l-Ḥasan Mūsā ibn Ja`far (‘a) adding to them money for *khumus* taxes. When the gift reached the hands of the Imam (‘a), he accepted the money and the garments but rejected the silk garment and gave it back to `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn with the same messenger who had brought them. The Imam (‘a) also wrote a letter to `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn with the following content: “Keep this garment and don’t let it out of your hand. Soon you will encounter a matter and you will need this garment.”

Not too long after that, `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn became angry with one of his close servants and dismissed him. This servant, who had recognized `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn’s inclination to Imam al-Kāẓim (‘a) and knew every item that his master had sent to the Imam, informed al-Rashīd of these matters against his master and added, “`Alī believes in the Imamate of Mūsā ibn Ja`far and hands over to him funds of the *khumus* taxes every year. He, moreover, gave him the black silk garment that you gifted him as an expression of respect.”

Upon hearing this, al-Rashīd became furious and decided to expose the matter, “If it is true, I will certainly take the life of `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn!” Immediately, he ordered his constabulary to bring `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn to him. When `Alī was brought before him, al-Rashīd asked, “What have you done with the garment that I gave you?” He answered, “O commander of the believers, it is in my possession in a sealed chest. I have stored it there. I rarely miss a morning

when I open it to take a look at the garment, seeking blessings and kissing it, and then I put it back there."

Al-Rashīd ordered him to present it at that very moment, so `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn summoned one of his servants and told him where to find the garment exactly as he had told al-Rashīd beforehand. Before long, the servant fetched the chest and put it before al-Rashīd who ordered the seal to be broken. As he looked at the garment, al-Rashīd found it exactly as he had been told by `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn. He calmed down and ordered `Alī to put it back in its place. He then said to him, "You may leave with respect, for I will never believe any information that is given to me against you." Moreover, he ordered that an abundant gift be given to `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn. As for the talebearing slave, al-Rashīd ordered him to be given one thousand lashes. After five hundred, the slave died.[39]

Historical Background of this Policy

It is not inaccurate to say that this policy of security is the most crucial that the Holy Imams (‘a) planned for the virtuous community. There are some indications of this in the Holy Qur'ān. Narrating the story of Prophet Moses (‘a), the Holy Qur'ān mentions that "the believing man of Pharaoh’s family" protected Prophet Moses (‘a) from dangers that were conspired against him, before and after his mission, as he gave the Prophet information about conspiracies by Pharaoh and his people to kill him.

`Alī ibn Yaqṭīn, the aforementioned, who was the commander-in-chief of the constabulary of Hārūn al-Rashīd,

39- Shaykh al-Mufīd, *Kitāb al-Irshād* 2:225-227; al-Ṭabrisī, *I`lām al-Warā bi-A`lām al-Hudā* 2:19-20; al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 48:137-138, H. 12.

and `Alī ibn Yaqṭīn's father were famous models who adopted this policy in the history of the Holy Imams (‘a). Even though we have not received details of the lives of other such personalities, there were surely others who played this role throughout the history of the Holy Imams (‘a) because we believe that this strategy of security must have existed in all the stages of the Holy Imams (‘a) lives.

In a written account of the life of `Abdullāh ibn Sinān, al-Najjāshī introduces him as follows:

`Abdullāh ibn (i.e. the son of) Ṭurayf was a manumitted slave of the Hashemites. Others claim that he had been manumitted by the offspring of Abū-Ṭālib and others claim the same for the offspring of al-`Abbās. He worked as a secretary for al-Manṣūr, al-Mahdī, al-Hādī, and al-Rashīd, the `Abbāsid ruler. A trustworthy person and one of our companions, he lived in Kūfah. He was so lofty that none could criticize him. He reported sayings from Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a). Shaykh al-Ṭūsī in his book, *al-Fihrist*, also counted him among the trustworthy reporters.[40]

The same thing has been said about Muḥammad ibn `Umayr, who was introduced by both Shī`ites and Sunnis as one of the greatest master jurisprudents.[41]

Muḥammad ibn Ismā`īl ibn Buzaygh was also one of the servants of al-Manṣūr, the `Abbāsid ruler, and one of his assistants. He and his cousin, Aḥmad ibn Ḥamzah, were among the most trustworthy Shī`ite reporters. One of the most righteous persons, he was of superior knowledge. Imam Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (‘a) once said to him:

40- Al-Ardabīlī, *Jāmi` al-Ruwāt* 1:487.

41- Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, *al-Fihrist*, pp. 142; al-Ardabīlī, *Jāmi` al-Ruwāt* 2:50-51.

إِنَّ لله تَعَـالَى بِـأَبْوَابِ الظَّـالمينَ مَنْ نَوَّرَ اللهُ لَهُ الْبُرْهَانَ وَمَكَّنَ لَـهُ فِي الْبِلاَد، لِيَدْفَعَ بِهِمْ عَنْ أَوْلِيَائِه وَيُصْلِحَ اللهُ بِهِمْ أُمُورَ الْمُسْلمينَ. إِلَيْهِمْ مَلْجَأُ الْمُؤْمنينَ منَ الـضُّرِّ، وَإِلَـيْهِمْ يَفْـزَعُ ذُو الْحَاجَـة مِـنْ شِـيعَتِنَا، وَبِهِـمْ يُـؤْمِنُ اللهُ رَوْعَـةَ الْمُؤْمِن فِي دَارِ الظَّلَمَـة. أُولَئِـكَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقّاً. أُولَئِـكَ أُمَنَـاءُ اللهِ فِـي أَرْضِـه. أُولَئِـكَ نُـورُ اللهِ فِـي رَعِيَّـتِهِمْ يَـوْمَ الْقِيَامَـة، وَيَزْهَـرُ نُـورُهُمْ لأَهْـلِ الـسَّمَاوَاتِ كَمَـا يَزْهَـرُ الْكَوَاكِـبُ الدُّرِّيَّـةُ لأَهْـلِ الأَرْضِ. أُولَئِكَ مَنْ نُـورُهُمْ نُـورُ الْقِيَامَـة، تُـضِيءُ مِـنْهُمُ الْقِيَامَـةُ. خُلِقُوا وَاللهِ لِلْجَنَّة وَخُلِقَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لَهُمْ. فَهَنِيئاً لَهُمْ. مَا عَلَى أَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ لَوْ شَاءَ لَنَالَ هَذَا كُلَّهُ؟

Among the officials of the unjust rulers, there are those through whom Almighty Allah has made bright his path and given power in the countries so as to protect His intimate servants through them and set right the affairs of Muslims. To them do the faithful believers resort when harm is done to them and to them do the needy among our Shī`ah turn. Through them does Almighty Allah dispel the fear of the believers in lands controlled by tyrants. These are the true believers. These are Almighty Allah's trustees in His lands. These shall be the source of Almighty Allah's light among His subjects on the Day of Resurrection. Their light is visible to the inhabitants of the heavens just as the shining stars are visible to the inhabitants of the earth. Their light shall light up the Resurrection. By Allah I swear, they were created for Paradise and Paradise was created for them. Congratulations to them. What prevents you, if you wish, from gaining all that?

The reporter asked, "May Allah accept me as ransom for you! How can we gain all this?"

The Imam (‘a) answered:

يَكُــونُ مَعَهُــمْ فَيُــسرُّنَا بِإِدْخَــالِ السُّرُورِ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِـنْ شِـيعَتِنَا، فَكُنْ مِنْهُمْ يَا مُحَمَّدُ.

One of you may join them (i.e. the unjust rulers) and, at the same time, please us by giving pleasure to the believers among our Shī`ah. So, Muḥammad, try to be one of these.[42]

If a survey of the companions of Holy Imams' ('a) is made, one can find many such individuals.

This policy indicates a remarkably outstanding and errorless plan by the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) that left a strong impact on the protection, perfection, and development of the virtuous community which extended to the entire Muslim nation.

42- Al-Ardabīlī, *Jāmi` al-Ruwāt* as quoted from al-Najjashī's book of biography (*rijāl*) 2:69.
This excellent description of the rank of these individuals has come from the significance of the nature of this job as well as its risk, difficulty and need for accuracy of implementation. In addition, such an office entails much suffering that a righteous individual encounters due to associating with and being in close proximity with tyrants, while secretly at odds with them.

REFUGE AND MIGRATION

The fourth measure of security that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) took for the virtuous community was to choose and migrate to safe shelters in regions far from the sway of unjust ruling authorities, including rural areas where Arab tribes that were loyal to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) lived, mountainous regions, or other regions known for their insubordination to the ruling regime. The individuals of the virtuous community were able to resort to this policy only in exceptional cases of emergency, to seek security and elude danger to their lives on the one hand while propagating the Islamic mission, spreading true guidance and righteousness and teaching morals and divine laws on the other.

The Holy Qur'ān has presented some examples and events of such migrations, such as in the story of Prophet Abraham (‘a). After he had encountered the aftermath of being thrown in the fire, he migrated with Prophet Lot (‘a):

> He (i.e. Abraham) said: I am fleeing to my Lord. Surely, He is the Mighty, the Wise. (29:26)

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Likewise, Prophet Moses (‘a) migrated to Madyan:

> So he (i.e. Moses) went forth therefrom, fearing, awaiting, (and) he said: My Lord! Deliver me from the unjust people. And when he turned his face towards Madyan, he said: Maybe my Lord will guide me along the right path. (28:21-22)

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Another example is the exodus of Moses and the Israelites from Egypt to the Holy Land.

This policy of emigration in the security system of the virtuous community also has a historical root in the deeds of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) who, in order to protect newly converted Muslims, ordered them to emigrate to Abyssinia and seek refuge therein, even though Abyssinia was not ruled by Islam. These Muslims had been exposed to severe persecution and they lacked any suitable means of protection. Once more, Muslims were ordered to emigrate to Yathrib (later called al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah—the luminous city) where Islam could find itself a center. The polytheists of this city had not yet taken an extremely hostile position against the Holy Prophet (ṣ) before his migration.

This procedure of emigration and asylum-seeking is also adopted by political movements today when some of their members, being harshly chased by the ruling regimes, seek refuge in other countries that allow them asylum.

There is a set of indications proving that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) adopted this policy of security so as to guarantee the protection of their followers. Some of these indications are as follows:

Historical Examples of Emigration

Some historical examples of emigration include:

- The descendants and offspring of the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), as well as righteous scholars of the Shī`ah, spread widely in various regions of the world, including remote and mountainous regions such as Māzandarān and Gilān in present day Iran (in earlier times, the lands of the Turks and Daylam), some regions of Africa, the Indian subcontinent, the Caucasus, and the Malawi Islands. It is well worth

mentioning that these Sayyids[43] and righteous scholars propagated Islam and spread the Islamic culture in these regions, converting their inhabitants to Islam.

- The Shī`ah of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) spread out in the various countries of the Muslim world without exception, especially in the ages of the Holy Imams (‘a). This state existed in other time periods also, despite the fact that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers lived under political and social siege and were subjected to execution, pursuit and constant threat that did not grant them opportunities to engage in extensive communication. This proves that the Shī`ah abided by the policy of migration and seeking refuge as planned by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). This is also confirmed in a number of traditions.

Describing the manners of the true Shī`ah, Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) is reported to have said:

إِنَّمَا شِيعَتُنَا مَنْ لاَ يَهِرُّ هَرِيرَ الْكَلْبِ، وَلاَ يَطْمَعُ طَمَعَ الْغُرَابِ، وَلاَ يَسْأَلُ النَّاسَ بِكَفِّهِ وَإِنْ مَاتَ جُوعاً... أُطْلُبْهُمْ فِي أَطْرَافِ الأَرْضِ. أُولَئِكَ الْخَشِنُ عَيْشُهُمْ، الْمُنْتَقِلَةُ دَارُهُمْ، الَّذِينَ إِنْ شَهِدُوا لَمْ يُعْرَفُوا، وَإِنْ

Our true Shī`ah are those who do not growl like a dog, do not covet like a crow, and do not beg from people even if they die of hunger....You can find them in the four corners of the world. They are those whose lives are simple, whose abodes move from one place to another, who, if seen, will not be known, and if absent, will not

43- Sayyid is a title of respect given to the descendants of the Holy Prophet (ṣ) through Imam `Alī and Lady Fāṭimah al-Zahra (‘a).

be missed... etc.[1] غَابُوا لَمْ يُفْتَقَدُوا.

- The reason for the emergence of some major events in the history of Islam was the adoption of this policy of emigration. For instance, the existence of Shī`ah emigrants in various countries gave rise to some great states, such as the Fāṭimid dynasty[2] and the Ḥasanid dynasty in Ṭabristān, as well as some `Alawid political movements, especially those which rose during the `Abbāsid dynasty. In conclusion, these Shī`ah emigrants gradually developed into great powers that threatened and disturbed the existence of despotic ruling regimes.
- Some traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) give a green light for resettlement in non-Muslim countries on the condition that there is an opportunity to announce and propagate one’s faith. However, such migration is regarded as a form of becoming a wanderer after migration to civility (*al-ta`arrub ba`da al-hijrah*),[3] which is forbidden by the religious law of Islam. Moreover, a set of traditions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) decisively confirm that vagrancy after migration to civility is prohibited.

Imam Ja`far al-Ṣādiq (‘a) has reported his fathers as

1- Abū-Zaynab al-Nu`mānī, *Kitāb al-Ghaybah*, 203-204; al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 68:165, H. 16.

2- The Fāṭimid Dynasty ruled in part of North Africa, Egypt, and Syria from AD 909 to 1171.

3- *Al-ta`arrub ba`da al-hijrah* indicates moving from a country where Islam is powerful, such as al-Madīnah, to another country where Islam may be weak and inactive because of the social conditions of that country, such as western countries in the present day and nomadic regions in the past.

quoting the following from the Holy Prophet to Imam `Alī Amīr al-Mu'minīn (‘a):

وَلاَ تَعَرُّبَ بَعْدَ الْهِجْرَةِ.

Do not return to nomadism after migration to civility.[1]

Muḥammad ibn Sinān has reported that among answers to religious questions, Imam al-Riḍā (‘a) wrote:

وَحَرَّمَ اللهُ التَّعَرُّبَ بَعْدَ الْهِجْرَةِ لِلرُّجُوعِ عَنِ الدِّينِ وَتَرْكِ الْمُؤَازَرَةِ لِلأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْحُجَجِ، عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلاَمُ، وَمَا فِي ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْفَسَادِ وَإِبْطَالِ حَقِّ كُلِّ ذِي حَقٍّ لِعِلَّةِ سُكْنَى الْبَدْوِ، وَلِذَلِكَ لَوْ عَرَفَ الرَّجُلُ الدِّينَ كَامِلاً لَمْ يَجُزْ لَهُ مُسَاكَنَةُ أَهْلِ الْجَهْلِ وَالْخَوْفِ عَلَيْهِ، لأَنَّهُ لاَ يُؤْمَنُ أَنْ يَقَعَ مِنْهُ تَرْكُ الْعِلْمِ وَالدُّخُولُ مَعَ أَهْلِ الْجَهْلِ وَالتَّمَادِي فِي ذَلِكَ.

Almighty Allah has forbidden vigrancy after migration to civility, because such an act may result in renunciation of one’s faith, abandonment of support of prophets and representatives (of Almighty Allah, i.e. Holy Imams), corruption, and denying the rights of others due to dwelling with Bedouins. Hence, a man who has fully recognized the religion is not permitted to live with the unschooled and put his faith under threat because it is not improbable that such a man will lose his familiarity with religion, decline into unenlightenment of religiously ignorant people, and go far into apostacy and ignorance.[2]

At the same time, other traditions refer to an exception of one case only from this religious law; that is, the case of the availability of an opportunity to propagate one’s faith and true beliefs when such opportunity is impracticable in

1- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:75, H. 1.
2- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:75-76, H. 2.

Muslim countries.

Ḥammād al-Samandī has reported that he said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a), “I often travel to the cities of the polytheists, but some of our companions claim that if I die in these territories, I will be added to the group of their dwellers.”

The Imam (‘a) asked:

يَا حَمَّادُ، إِذَا كُنْتَ ثَمَّ تَذْكُرُ أَمْرَنَا وَتَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ؟

O Ḥammād, do you proclaim our faith and invite people to it when you are there?

Ḥammād answered affirmatively, so the Imam asked again:

فَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِي هَذِهِ الْمُدُنِ، مُدُنِ الإِسْلاَمِ، تَذْكُرُ أَمْرَنَا وَتَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ؟

When you live in the territories of Muslims, can you make known our faith and invite people to it?

Ḥammād answered negatively. The Imam then said:

إِنَّكَ إِذَا متَّ ثَمَّ تُحْشَرُ أُمَّةً وَحْدَكَ وَيَسْعَى نُورُكَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ.

Therefore, if you die there, you will be resurrected alone in an independent group and your light will be running before you.[49]

49- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:76, H. 6.

CHAPTER TWO:
POLICIES OF GENERAL SECURITY

1. Coexistence with Other Muslims

2. Caution in Propagating the True Faith

3. Policy of Centralization

4. Observance of the Level of Toleration

PRELUDE

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) set forth a set of general policies to be followed in the area of security that supported the previously mentioned strategies of the security system of the virtuous community. This is because security procedures can be effective and useful only when they are carried out within the general policies of this discipline, especially when we realize that the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) intended to achieve a level of security which kept the virtuous community moving and existing within the borders of the unified Muslim society, to influence the Muslims and undertake the general responsibilities towards Islam and Muslim society. It is true that there are other significant objectives behind these general policies, but the goal of achieving security for the virtuous community is the most obvious and most significant. These policies may overlap the aforementioned measures and security procedures. In this discussion, we will refer to four general political policies and aspects that reflect bold security measures.

COEXISTENCE WITH OTHER MUSLIMS

The first general policy that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) set up for guaranteeing the security of the virtuous community was the construction of a well-established relationship with groups of Muslims and Muslim society as a whole. This policy represents the general principle followed by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and used by their followers as an effective two-edged instrument of pressure. Where campaigns of enlightenment are begun and good relations created with other groups of Muslims, those groups can be shifted from a pressure tool against the virtuous community—when the tyrannical ruling authorities incite them against the Shī`ah—to a pressure tool against the ruling authorities to put a stop to harassment of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their followers in particular and injustice and oppression against Muslims in general.

Actually, the majority of Muslims did put this change into effect despite the fact that many of them did not follow the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) sect. They, therefore, led a wide and influential opposition against such tyrannical authorities.

In fact, one of the most important goals of practicing *taqiyyah* was to achieve such coexistence with the other Muslims.[50]

In addition to enhancing the security of the virtuous community, coexistence with other Muslims has other

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50- This topic has been previously discussed with some details. It is also discussed in our book entitled ‘*al-wiḥdah al-islāmiyyah min manẓūr al-thaqalayn* (Islamic Unity from the Perspective of the Two Weighty Things—i.e. the Holy Qur'ān and the Ahl al-Bayt)’, pp. 140-144 & 159-162.

benefits, one of which is to ensure the cohesion and unity of Muslim society. This principle has another political goal, which is to protect the virtuous community from the probable negative reactions of other Muslims and ruling authorities.

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) took the following measures:

A. They directed their followers to present themselves in general ceremonies and important rituals, which the religion of Islam has paid special attention to as pillars of Muslim society, including Friday and Congregational Prayers.

The Shī`ah community showed some reservations on participating in these congregations. For instance, various terms of validity of congregational prayers, like the specification of decency as a quality to be met by prayer leaders, might not have been met because the majority of prayer leaders were officials or agents of the unjust ruling authorities. Another reservation was that the Shī`ah jurisprudentially differ with other Muslim groups on the performance of prayers in terms of the timing of the daily prayers and other rulings and acts as well as in terms of certain cultural contents that the Shī`ah believe to have been distorted through history, such as insulting Imam `Alī (‘a) and reviling his followers in sermons and lectures delivered during such congregations.

Despite these issues, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) urged their followers, firmly and vigorously, to attend these congregations.

Al-Ḥalabī has reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) as saying:

مَنْ صَلَّى مَعَهُمْ فِي الصَّفِّ الأَوَّلِ كَانَ كَمَنْ صَلَّى خَلْفَ رَسُولِ اللهِ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

Whoever prays with them (i.e. other Muslim groups) in the first line (of their congregational prayers) is regarded as one who prayed behind the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) in congregational prayer.[51]

`Abdullāh ibn Sinān has reported that he heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) saying:

أُوصِيكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ، وَلاَ تَحْمِلُوا النَّاسَ عَلَى أَكْتَافِكُمْ فَتَذِلُّوا. إِنَّ اللهَ، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، يَقُولُ فِي كِتَابِهِ: ﴿ ﴾ عُودُوا مَرْضَاهُمْ، وَاحْضُرُوا جَنَائِزَهُمْ، وَاشْهَدُوا لَهُمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ، وَصَلُّوا مَعَهُمْ فِي مَسَاجِدِهِمْ...

I instruct you to be God-wary. Do not carry people on your shoulders (i.e. do not abase yourself before others), lest you become humiliated. Verily, Almighty Allah says in His Book, “Speak to men good words. (2:83)” Visit the sick among them, attend their funeral ceremonies, bear witness for and against them, pray with them in their mosques...[52]

B. The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) urged their followers to comply with the social behavior common with other Muslims in general, and members of their (i.e. the followers) clans and tribes in particular, so that difference in doctrine and sect would not influence social relations. These common social behaviors included keeping in contact with relatives, attending their funeral and wedding ceremonies, visiting the sick, and other similar social activities and duties.

51- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 5:381, H. 4.

52- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 12:7, H. 6 (Ed. Āl al-Bayt Foundation).

Mu`āwiyah ibn Wahab has reported that he once asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a), “What should we do with respect to relationships among our people and associates who follow other faiths?”

The Imam (‘a) answered:

تَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى أَئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تَقْتَدُونَ بِهِمْ، فَتَصْنَعُونَ مَا يَصْنَعُونَ. فَوَاللهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَيَعُودُونَ مَرْضَاهُمْ وَيَشْهَدُونَ جَنَائِزَهُمْ وَيُقِيمُونَ الشَّهَادَةَ لَهُمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ وَيُؤَدُّونَ الأَمَانَةَ إِلَيْهِمْ.

You must watch the Imams you follow and do exactly as they do. By Allah (I swear), they (i.e. the Imams) visit the sick among them, attend their funeral ceremonies, testify for and against them, and fulfill their trusts.[53]

Kathīr ibn `Alqamah has reported that he once asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) for advice. The Imam (‘a) said:

أُوصِيكَ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ وَالْوَرَعِ وَالْعِبَادَةِ وَطُولِ السُّجُودِ وَأَدَاءِ الأَمَانَةِ وَصِدْقِ الْحَدِيثِ وَحُسْنِ الْجِوَارِ. فَبِهَذَا جَاءَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ. صِلُوا فِي عَشَائِرِكُمْ وَعُودُوا مَرْضَاكُمْ وَاشْهَدُوا جَنَائِزَكُمْ، وَكُونُوا لَنَا زَيْناً وَلاَ تَكُونُوا عَلَيْنَا شَيْناً. حَبِّبُونَا إِلَى النَّاسِ وَلاَ تُبَغِّضُونَا

I command you to fear Allah, relinquish prohibitions, abide by devotional acts, prostrate yourself as long as you can, fulfill your trusts, tell only the truth and treat your neighbor kindly. This is exactly what has been brought to us by Muḥammad—peace be upon him and his Household. Build up good relations with the members of your tribes. Visit the sick among them. Attend their funeral ceremonies. Represent us excellently (before others) and do not create a bad

53- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 8:399, H. 3.

إِلَـيْهِمْ، فَجُـرُّوا إِلَيْنَـا كُـلَّ مَـوَدَّةٍ وَادْفَعُوا عَنَّا كُلَّ شَرٍّ.

opinion of us. Make us beloved by people and do not make them upset at us. Attract to us all love and repel from us every evil.[54]

C. The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) highlighted the importance of their followers acting as excellent examples in Muslim communities so that they would be objects of others’ attention, sources of trustworthiness and reliability, the worthiest of keeping the trusts of others, and the persons people refer to for solving problems and judging disputes.

According to a valid tradition, Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) is reported to have said:

وَاللهِ لَحَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ، أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ كَانَ يَكُونُ فِي الْقَبِيلَةِ مِنْ شِيعَةِ عَلِيٍّ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ، فَيَكُونُ زَيْنَهَا؛ آدَاهُمْ لِلأَمَانَةِ وَأَقْضَاهُمْ لِلْحُقُوقِ وَأَصْدَقَهُمْ لِلْحَدِيثِ، إِلَيْهِ وَصَايَاهُمْ وَوَدَائِعُهُمْ. تُسْأَلُ الْعَشِيرَةُ عَنْهُ فَتَقُولُ: مَنْ مِثْلُ فُلانٍ؟ إِنَّهُ آدَانَا لِلأَمَانَةِ وَأَصْدَقُنَا لِلْحَدِيثِ.

I swear by Allah, my father (‘a) told me that a Shī`ite in a clan would be the best of its individuals, the most trustworthy, the most observant of the rights of others, and the most honest. The other individuals of that clan would always keep their wills and trusts with him and when they were asked about him, they would answer that he was unmatched among them: the most upright and the most honest.[55]

54- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 8:400, H. 8.

55- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 8:399 H. 2. More details of this topic will be cited in the sixth book of this series, which deals with the relationships of the virtuous community.

CAUTION IN PROPAGATING THE TRUE FAITH

The second general policy adopted by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) was caution and vigilance in propagating the true beliefs of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a),[56] including issues of loyalty to the Holy Imams (‘a), religious referential authority, doctrines, distinctive features of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), the duties of Muslims towards them, etc.

The traditions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) demonstrate that the purpose behind adopting this policy of caution is to guarantee the security and protect the individuals of this community. Making a comparison between the advantages of inviting people to true faith and guiding them to the true path on the one hand and forbidding the divulgence of doctrinal secrets and the perils ensuing from such propagation when conditions are not appropriate or when this causes divulgence of a doctrinal secret on the other, the Holy Imams (‘a) said they would prefer banning propagation and postponing growth, leaving dissemination to its natural course.

Shaykh al-Ṣadūq has recorded the following authenticated tradition:

Muḥammad ibn `Īsā has reported that he read the following in `Alī ibn Hilāl’s message to Imam al-Riḍā (‘a): It has been reported from your fathers that they warned you against debating on religious affairs. However, some of your followers (theologians) interpreted this warning to be exclusively meant for those who are deficient in this field and believed those who could do it adeptly were excluded

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56- Previous discussion has been made regarding this topic along with some traditions supporting the idea.

from this warning. Is this interpretation accurate or not?"

The Imam (‘a) replied:

الْمُحْسِنُ وَغَيْرُ الْمُحْسِنِ لاَ يَتَكَلَّمُ فِيهِ، فَإِنَّ إِثْمَهُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِ.

Both, those who are inexperienced and those who can debate adeptly are included in this ban. Verily, its sin is greater than its advantage.[57]

To explain, the Imam (‘a) said that even though there were advantages in propagating the true faith, the political and psychological circumstances were at that time inappropriate; therefore, the drawbacks would be greater than the advantages.

According to another acceptably reported (*ḥasan*) tradition,[58] Ḥamrān has reported that the following dialogue was conducted between Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) and himself:

Ḥamrān: May I ask you something that Allah may lead you to more success?

The Imam: Yes, you may.

Ḥamrān: I now practice an approach quite opposite to my previous approach! I used to visit countries and invite one or two men or women to my faith and then Almighty Allah would save whomever He willed. Now, I can no longer invite anybody.

The Imam: What harms you if you leave people to their Lord? Whomever Almighty Allah decides to bring out of darkness into the light shall be so brought. To make sure of

57- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:457, H. 26.

58- A *ḥadīth* is classified as *ḥasan* when it is reported by an Imāmī-Shī`ite reporter whose faith has been praised in such a manner that is acceptable by rational people although none has decided him as trustworthy or as faithless or deviant.

one's receptiveness is better than casting (your faith) onto another arbitrarily.

Ḥamrān: Please, tell me about the interpretation of Almighty Allah's saying, "And whoever keeps it (i.e. a soul) alive, it is as though he kept alive all men. (5:32)"

The Imam: To keep a soul alive is to save it from burning or drowning... However, its most profound interpretation is to invite an individual to the true faith and a positive response is received.[59]

Al-Fuḍayl has reported that he asked Imam al-Ṣādiq ('a), "May we invite people to this matter (i.e. faith)?"

The Imam answered:

يَا فُضَيْلُ، إنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إذَا أَرَادَ بعَبْد خَيْراً أَمَرَ مَلَكاً فَأَخَذَ بعُنُقه حَتَّى أَدْخَلَهُ فِي هَذَا الأَمْرِ طَائعاً أَوْ كَارِهاً.

O Fuḍayl, if Almighty Allah intends to do (the) favor (of true guidance) to a servant (of His), He orders an angel to grasp him by the neck and forcefully put him in this matter, willingly or unwillingly.[60]

Kulayb ibn Mu`āwiyah al-Ṣaydāwī has reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq ('a) said to him:

إيَّاكُمْ وَالنَّاسَ! إنَّ اللهَ، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، إذَا أَرَادَ بعَبْد خَيْراً نَكَتَ فِي قَلْبه نَكْتَةً فَتَرَكَهُ وَهُوَ يَجُولُ لذَلكَ وَيَطْلُبُهُ. لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ إذَا كَلَّمْتُمُ النَّاسَ قُلْتُمْ:

Beware of (inviting) people (to your faith)! Verily, if Almighty Allah intends to do (the) favor (of true guidance) to a servant (of His), He casts something in his heart and leaves him go after it from place to place and seek it...It would be better for you if you say, while replying to those who blame you for choosing

59- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:446-447, H. 1.
60- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:449, H. 1.

ذَهَبْنَا حَيْثُ ذَهَبَ اللهُ، وَاخْتَرْنَا مَنِ إخْتَارَهُ اللهُ؛ إخْتَارَ اللهُ مُحَمَّداً وَإخْتَرْنَا آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

this sect, "We have moved towards those whom Almighty Allah preferred and we chose them whom Almighty Allah has chosen. Almighty Allah has chosen Muḥammad (ṣ) and we have chosen Muḥammad's Household (ʻa)."[61]

Thābit ibn Sa`īd has reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq (ʻa) said to him:

يَا ثَابِتُ، مَا لَكُمْ وَلِلنَّاسِ؟ كُفُّوا عَنِ النَّاسِ. وَلاَ تَدْعُوا أَحَداً إِلَى أَمْرِكُمْ، فَوَاللهِ لَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ السَّمَاءِ وَأَهْلَ الأَرْضِ إِجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يُضِلُّوا عَبْداً هَدَاهُ اللهُ مَا إِسْتَطَاعُوا. كُفُّوا عَنِ النَّاسِ، وَلاَ يَقُولُ أَحَدُكُمْ: أَخِي وَابْنُ عَمِّي وَجَارِي. فَإِنَّ اللهَ، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، إِذَا أَرَادَ بِعَبْدٍ خَيْراً طَيَّبَ رُوحَهُ، فَلاَ يَسْمَعُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ إِلاَّ عَرَفَهُ، وَلاَ بِمُنْكَرٍ إِلاَّ أَنْكَرَهُ. ثُمَّ يَقْذِفُ اللهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ كَلِمَةً يَجْمَعُ بِهَا أَمْرَهُ.

O Thābit! What do you want of people? Stop disputing with people (attempting to convince them) and do not invite them to your faith. I swear by Allah that if all the inhabitants of the skies and all the inhabitants of the earth help each other to mislead a servant that Almighty Allah wants to guide, they shall never be able to do it. Stop contending with people and do not offer your faith to anyone even if you believe one will respond because he is your brother, cousin, or neighbor. Verily, if Almighty Allah wants somebody to join the truth, He will make his spirit responsive and then that person will follow whatever good matter he encounters and reject any evil that he encounters. Then, Almighty Allah will cast in his heart a word that determines his decree.[62]

61- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:449, H. 1.
62- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:450, H. 3; Shaykh ⇨

`Alī ibn `Uqbah, on the authority of his father, has reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) as saying:

إِجْعَلُوا أَمْرَكُمْ هَذَا إِلَى الله، وَلاَ تَجْعَلُوهُ لِلنَّاسِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَا كَانَ لله فَهُوَ لله، وَمَا كَانَ لِلنَّاسِ فَلاَ يَصْعَدُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ، وَلاَ تُخَاصِمُوا بِدِينِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ الْمُخَاصَمَةَ مُمْرِضَةٌ لِلْقَلْبِ. إِنَّ الله، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، قَالَ لِنَبِيِّه، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْه وَآله: ﴿ک ک ک گ گ گ گ ڳ ڳ ڳ﴾ وَقَالَ: ﴿ڦ ڦ ڦ ڄ ڄ ڄ﴾ ذَرُوا النَّاسَ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ أَخَذُوا عَنِ النَّاسِ، وَإِنَّكُمْ أَخَذْتُمْ عَنْ رَسُولِ الله، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْه وَآله، وَعَلِيٍّ، عَلَيْه السَّلاَمُ، وَلاَ سَوَاءَ. وَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ أَبِي، عَلَيْه السَّلاَمُ، يَقُولُ: إِذَا كَتَبَ اللهُ عَلَى عَبْدٍ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ فِي هَذَا الأَمْرِ، كَانَ أَسْرَعَ إِلَيْه مِنَ الطَّيْرِ إِلَى وَكْرِه.

Devote this matter (i.e. faith) to Almighty Allah alone and do not display it before people. Verily, what is truly intended to Almighty Allah shall permanently be to Him, but whatever is intended for people shall never ascend to the heavens. Do not dispute with others in matters appertaining to your faith. Verily, disputation ends in disease of the heart (spiritual disease). Almighty Allah has said to His Prophet (ṣ), “Surely, you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases. (28:56)” He has also said, “Will you then force men to become believers? (10:99)” Leave people alone. Verily, they received from other people while you have received from Allah’s Messenger (ṣ) and `Alī (‘a) and none else. Indeed, I heard my father saying, “If Almighty Allah decides for someone to join this faith, he will join it swifter than a bird hurrying to its nest.”[63]

al-Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfī*, 2:213, H. 2.

63- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:450, H. 4.

On the other hand, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) allowed propagation for the true faith when they believed that there was good opportunity and positive ground available for people to receive it.

Sulaymān ibn Khālid has reported that he said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a), “I have some relatives who usually listen to me. May I call them to this faith?”

The Imam (‘a) answered:

نَعَمْ! إِنَّ اللهَ يَقُولُ فِي كِتَابِهِ: ﴿وا وا ؤ ؤ ۇ ۋ ۋ ۅ ۅ ۉ ۉ ې﴾

Yes, you may. Almighty Allah says in His Book, “O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones. (66:6)

Zayd ibn `Alī has reported the following from his ancestors:

One day, someone asked the Holy Prophet (ṣ) for guidance and the Holy Prophet (ṣ) advised him, saying:

أُوصِيكَ أَنْ لاَ تُشْرِكَ بِاللهِ شَيْئاً، وَلاَ تَعْصِ وَالِدَيْكَ... وَادْعُ النَّاسَ إِلَى الإِسْلاَمِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ لَكَ بِكُلِّ مَنْ أَجَابَكَ عِتْقَ رَقَبَةٍ مِنْ وُلْدِ يَعْقُوبَ.

I advise you not to set any partner (in godhead) with Almighty Allah. Never disobey your parents....Call people to Islam. Be it known to you that you will win the reward of manumitting a slave from the descendants of (Prophet) Jacob (‘a) for every single person that responds to you.[64]

Abū-Baṣīr has reported that he once asked Imam al-Bāqir (‘a), “Am I permitted to call people to my faith?”

The Imam (‘a) answered, “No, you are not.”

64- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:448, H. 5.

Abū-Baṣīr further asked, "If one asks me to lead him to the true faith, will I then be permitted to do so?"

The Imam (‘a) answered:

نَعَمْ! مَنِ إسْتَرْشَدَكَ فَارْشُدْهُ، فَإِنِ إسْتَزَادَكَ فَزِدْهُ، وَإِنْ جَاحَدَكَ فَجَاحِدْهُ.

Yes. If one asks for true guidance, you may show him. If one asks for more details, you may give them to him. If one does not believe you, you may reject him.[65]

At another time, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) urged their followers to propagate the true faith after they had defined a suitable environment for its acceptance; that is, youths who desire acquainting themselves with the truth and their minds and hearts are usually open to knowledge.

Ismā`īl ibn `Abd al-Khāliq has reported that he heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) asking al-Aḥwal, "You have come from Baṣrah, have you not?"

"Yes, I have," answered al-Aḥwal.

"How do you evaluate the people's enthusiasm towards this matter and in joining it?" Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) asked.

"Well," answered al-Aḥwal, "There is a lack of enthusiasm. Some have joined, but they are still few."

Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) instructed:

عَلَيْكَ بِالأَحْدَاثِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ أَسْرَعُ إِلَى كُلِّ خَيْرٍ.

Concentrate on the youths, because they always hurry towards every good thing more than others do.[66]

By comparing these situations and traditions with each

65- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:450-451, H. 6.
66- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:447-448, H. 4.

other and taking into consideration the circumstances under which they traditions were stated, we can conclude that the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) set up a general policy for the propagation of the path of Almighty Allah and true faith. This policy is established on a number of levels:

(i) Responsibility towards one’s family members and clan (i.e. the private circle).

(ii) Full acquaintance with the person to whom the invitation is being extended. To put in simpler words, it is necessary that those persons are receptive and open minded.

(iii) Availability of suitable political and social security that assures protection of the virtuous community against potential injuries that could arise from rashness in propagation through examination of the circumstances exactly and accurately so as to avoid missing the opportunity to procure the common interests of Muslims, lead them to true guidance, and seek Almighty Allah’s nearness through acts of propagation.[67]

67- In a coming discussion, we will discuss in detail the promulgational aspect of this topic.

POLICY OF CENTRALIZATION

The third measure adopted by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) for ensuring the security of the virtuous community was that they sternly instructed their followers not to respond imprudently to the calls of those who claimed reformation or revolution against adverse political and social conditions unless they received affirmation for such calls from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) directly or when the reformative movement was personally undertaken by the promised Imam of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

This is because many so-called reformists have wicked intentions and their main goal is to come to power or achieve personal or illegitimate gains. Past examples of this include the `Abbāsids who called for revolution against the Umayyad dynasty and some Ḥasanid movements at their outset, which were led by Muḥammad, the innocent souled (*dhu'l-nafs al-zakiyyah*), and his brother Ibrāhīm (the sons of `Abdullāh al-Maḥḍ ibn al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā ibn al-Ḥasan (‘a) ibn `Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (‘a)).

Other reformists may have been sincere in their intentions but were incapable of identifying political conditions because they lacked familiarity with the circumstances surrounding the situation, or they based their uprisings on foundations that seemed sound but were actually restricted to their adopters only.

Shaykh al-Kulaynī, in *al-Kāfī*, has quoted al-Mu`allā ibn Khunays to have narrated the following:

I carried the letters of `Abd al-Salām ibn Na`īm, Sadīr, and many others from our companions to Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) at

the time of the uprising of the *Musawwidah*[68] and just before the victory of the `Abbāsids. These letters carried their determination to give power to Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a). The Imam threw these letters down violently and said:

أُفّ! أُفّ! مَا أَنَا لِهَؤُلاَء بِإِمَامٍ. أَمَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ إِنَّمَا يَقْتُلُ السُّفْيَانِيَّ؟

Ugh! Ugh! I am not the Imam of these. Do they not know that the Imam who shall undertake this matter will kill al-Sufyānī beforehand?[69]

In an authentic tradition reported by Shaykh al-Kulaynī in his book of *al-Kāfī*, al-`Ayṣ ibn al-Qāsim has reported that he heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) saying:

عَلَيْكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ وَحْدَهُ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَـهُ، وَانْظُـرُوا لأَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَـوَاللهِ إِنَّ الرَّجُـلَ لَيَكُـونُ لَـهُ الْغَـنَمُ فِيهَـا الرَّاعِي، فَإِذَا وَجَدَ رَجُلاً هُوَ أَعْلَـمُ بِغَنَمِه مِنَ الَّـذِي هُـوَ فِيهَـا يُخْرِجُـهُ وَيَجِيءُ بِـذَلِكَ الرَّجُـلِ الَّـذِي هُـوَ أَعْلَمُ بِغَنَمِه مِـنَ الَّـذِي كَـانَ فِيهَـا.

Adhere to fear of Almighty Allah, the One, without setting any partner with him and decide for yourselves. I swear by Allah, an owner of a flock of sheep who has hired a shepherd must definitely dismiss his shepherd and appoint another if he finds that the latter is more skilled in shepherding his sheep than the earlier. Similarly, if you were to have two souls, you might have used one as a trial and

68- *Musawwidah* (the black-dressed revolutionaries) indicates the rebels who mutinied against the Umayyad dynasty before the `Abbāsids came to power, calling for the rulership of `Abbāsids such as Abū-Muslim al-Khurāsānī.

69- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:37-38, H. 8.
The Imam (‘a) intends to say that the Imam of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) who would ‘undertake the matter’ would come after the killing of al-Sufyānī (one from the descendants of Sufyān), and this had not yet happened. Therefore, the promised Imam was not Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a).

وَاللهِ لَوْ كَانَتْ لأَحَدِكُمْ نَفْسَانِ يُقَاتِلُ بِوَاحِدَةٍ يُجَرِّبُ بِهَا ثُمَّ كَانَتِ الأُخْرَى بَاقِيَةً تَعْمَلُ عَلَى مَا قَدِ اسْتَبَانَ لَهَا، وَلَكِنْ لَهُ نَفْسٌ وَاحِدَةٌ إِذَا ذَهَبَتْ فَقَدْ وَاللهِ ذَهَبَتِ التَّوْبَةُ. فَأَنْتُمْ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْتَارُوا لأَنْفُسِكُمْ. إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ آتٍ مِنَّا فَانْظُرُوا عَلَى أَيِّ شَيْءٍ تَخْرُجُونَ، وَلاَ تَقُولُوا خَرَجَ زَيْدٌ، فَإِنَّ زَيْداً كَانَ عَالِماً وَكَانَ صَدُوقاً وَلَمْ يَدْعُكُمْ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ، وَإِنَّمَا دَعَاكُمْ إِلَى الرِّضَا مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ. وَلَوْ ظَهَرَ لَوَفَى بِمَا دَعَاكُمْ إِلَيْهِ. إِنَّمَا خَرَجَ إِلَى سُلْطَانٍ مُجْتَمِعٍ لِيَنْقُضَهُ. فَالْخَارِجُ مِنَّا الْيَوْمَ إِلَى أَيِّ شَيْءٍ يَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى الرِّضَا مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَنَحْنُ نُشْهِدُكُمْ أَنَّا لَسْنَا نَرْضَى بِهِ وَهُوَ يَعْصِينَا الْيَوْمَ وَلَيْسَ مَعَهُ أَحَدٌ،

then directed your second soul according to the trial of the first. However, you have only one soul. If it expires, the opportunity to repent will definitely expire, too. So, you must decide for yourselves. If one belonging to our community comes to you and invites you to an uprising, you must first of all consider the reason for which you would rise. Do not put forward the uprising of Zayd as your excuse! Verily, Zayd was knowledgeable and honest. He did not call you to accept him as your leader; rather, he called you to revolt for the sake of attaining the pleasure of Muḥammad's Household (ʻa). Had he succeeded (in his revolution), he would have certainly fulfilled his pledge and the slogan to which he had called you. However, he rose up against a well-fortified power trying to demolish it. Now, if anyone from our community revolts and invites you (to his revolution) raising the slogan of attaining the pleasure of Muḥammad's Household (ʻa), we call you (all) to bear witness that we do not approve of such a person because he is disobeying us and none (of us) stands with him. When (different) pennons and standards are raised, the followers must most worthily listen to us

70- Al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah*, 11:35-36, H. 1.

وَهُوَ إِذَا كَانَت الرَّايَاتُ وَالأَلْوِيَةُ أَجْدَرُ أَنْ لاَ يُسْمَعَ مِنَّا إِلاَّ مَنِ إِجْتَمَعَتْ بَنُو فَاطِمَةَ مَعَهُ، فَوَاللهِ مَا صَاحِبُكُمْ إِلاَّ مَنِ إِجْتَمَعُوا عَلَيْهِ. إِذَا كَانَ رَجَبُ فَأَقْبِلُوا عَلَى إِسْمِ اللهِ، وَإِنْ أَحْبَبْتُمْ أَنْ تَتَأَخَّرُوا إِلَى شَعْبَانَ فَلاَ ضَيْرَ، وَإِنْ أَحْبَبْتُمْ أَنْ تَصُومُوا فِي أَهَالِيكُمْ فَلَعَلَّ ذَلِكَ يَكُونُ أَقْوَى لَكُمْ، وَكَفَاكُمْ بِالسُّفْيَانِيِّ عَلاَمَةً.

and obey only him whom all descendants of Fāṭimah (‘a) join. By Allah, the one to lead you (i.e. the promised Imam) is only the one whom all these descendants join unanimously. When (the month of) Rajab falls, you may gather in the Name of Allah. If you wish, you may postpone it to Sha`bān—there is no objection in this. If you even wish to spend the month of fasting with your families, this may be better for you. The advent of al-Sufyānī will be a sufficient sign for you.[70]

Similar to this tradition, Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, in his book *`Ilal al-Sharā'i`*, has reported that al-`Ayṣ ibn al-Qāsim, through a valid chain of authority, heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) saying:

إِتَّقُوا اللهَ وَانْظُرُوا لأَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَنْ نَظَرَ لَهَا أَنْتُمْ. لَوْ كَانَ لأَحَدِكُمْ نَفْسَانِ فَقَدَّمَ إِحْدَاهُمَا وَجَرَّبَ بِهَا، إِسْتَقْبَلَ التَّوْبَةَ بِالأُخْرَى كَانَ، وَلَكِنَّهَا نَفْسٌ وَاحِدَةٌ إِذَا ذَهَبَتْ فَقَدْ وَاللهِ ذَهَبَتِ التَّوْبَةُ. إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ مِنَّا آتٍ لِيَدْعُوَكُمْ إِلَى الرِّضَا مِنَّا فَنَحْنُ نُشْهِدُكُمْ أَنَّا لاَ نَرْضَى. إِنَّهُ لاَ يُطِيعُنَا الْيَوْمَ وَهُوَ وَحْدَهُ. فَكَيْفَ يُطِيعُنَا إِذَا إِرْتَفَعَتِ الرَّايَاتُ

Fear Allah and decide for yourselves. Those worthiest to choose for you are youselves. If you were to have two souls, you might have used one as trial and used the other for repenting according to the result of the trial of the first. However, there is only one soul. If it expires, repentance will definitely expire, too. If one from us comes to you raising the slogan of attaining the pleasure of Muḥammad’s Household (‘a), we now call you (all) to witness that we do not accept such a person because

he has not obeyed us—he is alone; how then can he obey us when different pennons and standards will be raised?[71]

وَالأَعْلاَمُ؟

In conclusion, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) believed that the decision to participate in an armed struggle, be it for conquest[72] or against an unjust ruling authority, must be centralized and under the direct personal authority of the Holy Imams (‘a). This is because such participation is related to the security of the virtuous community as a whole and might expose the interests and existence of the

71- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:38, H. 10.

72- According to a tradition that is validly reported from Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a), `Abbād al-Baṣrī met Imam `Alī Zayn al-`Ābidīn (‘a) on his way to Makkah and said, “O `Alī, you have abandoned jihad and escaped its difficulty and come to Ḥajj and its easiness. Almighty Allah says, “Surely, Allah has bought of the believers their persons and their property so that they shall have Paradise. They fight in Allah's way, so they slay and are slain. This is a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'ān. And who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah? Rejoice therefore in the pledge, which you have made, and that is the mighty achievement. (9:111)”
Imam Zayn al-`Ābidīn (‘a) commented, “You may recite what comes next.”
So, the man recited, “They who turn to Allah, who serve Him, who praise Him, who fast, who bow down, who prostrate themselves, who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and who keep the limits of Allah. Give good news to the believers. (9:112)”
The Imam thus commented, “If we find persons demonstrating these characteristics, we will definitely leave Ḥajj and perform jihad with them.”
Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 12:32-33, H. 3. You may also refer to H. 1 & 2 of the same page.

community to danger. In addition, such a decision must be very accurate for it may expose participants (in such armed rebellion or struggle) to religious, moral and mortal danger.

Al-Ḥusayn ibn Khālid in a validly reported tradition has reported that he said to Imam al-Riḍā (‘a), “May Allah accept me as ransom for you! There is a tradition reported by `Abdullāh ibn Bukayr on the authority of `Ubayd ibn Zurārah.”

“What is it?” asked the Imam (‘a).

Al-Ḥusayn said, “`Ubayd ibn Zurārah has reported that he met Abū-`Abdullāh (‘a) (Imam al-Ṣādiq) in the same year of the uprising of Ibrāhīm ibn `Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥasan and asked him, ‘May Allah accept me as ransom for you! This man has composed verses and is inciting people to join him. What is your instruction in this regard?’

The Imam (‘a) said:

إِتَّقُــوا اللهَ وَاسْــكُنُوا مَــا سَكَنَتِ السَّمَاءُ وَالأَرْضُ.

Fear Almighty Allah and do not make any move as long as the heavens and the earth are settling down.

“On receiving this instruction, `Abdullāh ibn Bukayr said, ‘If `Ubayd ibn Zurārah is honest, there will be no advent of an Imam and no uprising!’”

Imam al-Riḍā (‘a) explained:

إِنَّ الْحَدِيثَ عَلَى مَا رَوَاهُ عُبَيْدٌ، وَلَيْسَ عَلَى مَا تَأَوَّلَهُ عَبْدُ اللهِ بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ. إِنَّمَا عَنَى أَبُو عَبْدِ اللهِ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ، بِقَوْلِه "مَا سَكَنَتِ السَّمَاءُ" مِنَ النِّدَاءِ بِإِسْمِ صَاحِبِكَ، وَ"مَا

The tradition is true, as exactly as what `Ubayd narrated, but its interpretation is not like what `Abdullāh has understood. Abū-`Abdullāh (‘a) meant that you may keep silent as long as the heavens had not yet released its call with the name of your companion (i.e. the promised

سَـكَنَت الأَرْضُ مِـنَ الْخَـسْفِ بِالْجَيْشِ.

Imam) and as long as the earth had not yet swallowed the army.[73]

Zarr ibn Ḥubaysh has reported that Imam `Alī, the Commander of the Faithful (‘a), delivered a speech at al-Nahrawān (or during the Battle of al-Nahrawān) in which he said:

إِنَّ الْفِتْنَةَ إِذَا أَقْبَلَتْ شَبَّهَتْ.

Verily, when sedition comes (upon you), it will cause you to confuse (right with wrong).

The Imam (‘a) then referred to the coming seditions. When he finished, a man stood up and said, “O Commander of the Faithful, what should the people of that time do?”

The Imam (‘a) answered:

أُنْظُرُوا إِلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّكُمْ، فَإِنْ لَبدُوا فَالْبـدُوا، وَإِن إِسْتَـصْرَخُوكُمْ فَانْصُرُوهُمْ تُؤْجَرُوا، وَلاَ تَسْتَبِقُوهُمْ فَتَصْرَعُكُمُ الْبَلِيَّةُ.

You may observe the Household of your Prophet (ṣ); if they hide, you should hide, but if they call for your aid, you must then support them that you may be rewarded. Never embark upon a deed before they order it; lest you will be knocked out by tribulations.

The Imam (‘a) then foretold the coming of relief at the advent of the Patron of the Matter (i.e. Imam al-Mahdī).[74]

In the aforementioned traditions, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) mentioned certain issues and instructed regarding how to take political positions towards these issues. Some

73- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:39-40, H. 14 (in the margin).
74- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:41, H. 17.

oppositionists rebelled against ruling authorities and claimed Imamate or being the promised and expected Imam of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), such as when people illusively thought that Muḥammad ibn `Abdullāh (*dhu’l-nafs al-zakiyyah*) was the promised Imam. Therefore, the Holy Imams (‘a) explained that such claims were baseless and it was unacceptable to respond to them and that any banner (i.e. political movement) founded on such false claims would certainly represent false deities that were worshipped in the place of Almighty Allah.

Thus, all these traditions confirm absolute impermissibility to participate in such reformative actions made before the advent of the Rising Imam (the Mahdi) in addition to other traditions which emphasize the duty of waiting in anticipation of the advent of the Rising Imam because it is futile to rise up or revolt before that since all such revolutions will inevitably end up in failure.

Imam `Alī Zayn al-`Ābidīn (‘a) is reported to have said:

والله، لاَ يَخْرُجُ أَحَدٌ مِنَّا قَبْلَ خُرُوجِ الْقَائِمِ إِلاَّ كَانَ مَثَلُهُ مَثَلَ فَرْخٍ طَارَ مِنْ وَكْرِه قَبْلَ أَنْ يَسْتَوِيَ جَنَاحَاهُ، فَأَخَذَهُ الصِّبْيَانُ فَعَبَثُوا بِه.

By Allah I swear, any one of us who stages a revolution before the advent of the Rising Imam will most certainly be like a nestling that leaves its nest before its wings are grown-up enough to fly, so boys take it and play with it.[75]

Sadīr has reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) to have said to him:

75- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:36, H. 2.

يَا سَدِيرُ، إِلْزَمْ بَيْتَكَ، وَكُنْ حِلْساً مِنْ أَحْلاَسِه، وَاسْكُنْ مَا سَكَنَ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ، فَإِذَا بَلَغَكَ أَنَّ السُّفْيَانِيَّ قَدْ خَرَجَ فَارْحَلْ إِلَيْنَا وَلَوْ عَلَى رِجْلِكَ.

O Sadīr, stick to your house, as if you are one of its rugs, and keep still as long as day and night keep still. If you are informed that al-Sufyānī has risen, then you must come to us, even if you have to come on foot.[76]

According to an authentic tradition, Abū-Baṣīr has reported Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) as saying:

كُلُّ رَايَةٍ تُرْفَعُ قَبْلَ قِيَامِ الْقَائِمِ فَصَاحِبُهَا طَاغُوتٌ يُعْبَدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللهِ، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

As for every standard (i.e. political movement) that is raised before the advent of the Rising Imam, its bearer is (like) a deity that is worshipped in place of Almighty Allah.[77]

It is, however, necessary to understand these traditions in context with other traditions which have explained and clarified this matter along with details of the surrounding circumstances. In fact, some traditions have excepted certain political movements and even invoked Almighty Allah’s mercy upon their leaders, because they had not invited people to follow them as if they were an Imam—as an example the previously mentioned tradition of al-`Ayṣ ibn al-Qāsim about the movement of Zayd ibn `Alī.

Confirming and shedding light on this meaning, Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, in his book of *`Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, has reported the following narration on the authority of Ibn Abī-`Abdūn on the authority of his father:

When Zayd ibn Mūsā ibn Ja`far revolted in Baṣrah and set

76- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:37, H. 3.
77- Al-Ḥurr al-`Āmilī, *Wasā'il al-Shī`ah* 11:37, H. 6.

the homes of the `Abbāsids on fire, they took him to Ma'mūn. Ma'mūn forgave him on behalf of his brother `Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā (‘a) and told the Imam, “If your brother has revolted and has done this and that, so also did Zayd ibn `Alī before him and was killed. If you did not have the rank before me that you now have, I would have killed him because what he has done is not negligible.”

Imam al-Riḍā (‘a) said:

يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، لا تَقِسْ أَخِي زَيْداً إِلَى زَيْدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنْ عُلَمَاءِ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ غَضِبَ لِلَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَجَاهَدَ أَعْدَاءَهُ حَتَّى قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ وَلَقَدْ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي مُوسَى بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَبَاهُ جَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ يَقُولُ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ عَمِّي زَيْداً إِنَّهُ دَعَا إِلَى الرِّضَا مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَلَوْ ظَفِرَ لَوَفَى بِمَا دَعَا إِلَيْهِ، وَقَدِ اسْتَشَارَنِي فِي خُرُوجِهِ فَقُلْتُ لَهُ يَا عَمِّ إِنْ رَضِيتَ أَنْ تَكُونَ الْمَقْتُولَ الْمَصْلُوبَ بِالْكُنَاسَةِ فَشَأْنَكَ فَلَمَّا وَلَّى قَالَ جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ وَيْلٌ لِمَنْ سَمِعَ وَاعِيَتُهُ فَلَمْ يُجِبْهُ.

O Commander of the Faithful, do not compare my brother with Zayd ibn `Alī. Zayd was one of the scholars from the Household of Muḥammad (ṣ) and he was angry for the sake of the Honorable and Exalted God. He fought with the enemies of God until he was killed following His path. My father Mūsā ibn Ja`far (‘a) narrated to me that he had heard his father Ja`far ibn Muḥammad (‘a) saying, ‘May Allah have mercy upon my uncle Zayd. He invited the people to attain pleasure of Muḥammad’s Household (‘a). He would have fulfilled what he said if he had become victorious. He consulted with me about his uprising and I told him, ‘O uncle, do it if you are pleased with being killed and your corpse being hung up from the gallows in the district of al-Kunnāsah.’ After Zayd left, Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “Woe be to those who hear his call but do not help him!’

Then, Ma'mūn asked, “O Abu’l-Ḥasan! Have there not been traditions blaming those who unrightfully claim to be the

Divine Leaders (i.e. Imams)?"

Imam al-Riḍā (‘a) answered:

إِنَّ زَيْدَ بْنَ عَلِي عَلَيْهِ السَّلامُ لَمْ يَدَّعِ مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ بِحَقٍّ وَإِنَّهُ كَانَ أَتْقَى لِلَّهِ مِنْ ذَاكَ إِنَّهُ قَالَ أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى الرِّضَا مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَإِنَّمَا جَاءَ مَا جَاءَ فِي مَنْ يَدَّعِي أَنَّ اللَّهَ نَصَّ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ يَدْعُو إِلَى غَيْرِ دِينِ اللَّهِ وَيَضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَكَانَ زَيْدٌ وَاللَّهِ مِمَّنْ خُوطِبَ بِهَذِهِ الْآيَةِ: وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ...

Zayd did not make any such unrightful claims. He was too pious to do so. He invited the people to attain the pleasure of Muḥammad's Household (‘a). Those traditions are about the people who claim that Allah has appointed them as leaders by name and then invite the people to a religion other than Allah's and mislead the people so as to cause them to stray off the way of Allah. I swear by Allah that Zayd was one of those addressed by the following verse: 'Strive in His cause as you ought to strive. He has chosen you...'[78]

Evidently, this tradition indicates that condemnation of revolt by the Holy Imams (‘a) is meant for those who, when calling to revolt, claim Imamate or divinely commissioned leadership of the Muslim nation.

There are also other traditions admiring the revolutionary movement of Ḥusayn ibn `Alī ibn al-Ḥasan al-Muthallath ibn al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā ibn al-Ḥasan (‘a) ibn `Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib (‘a), known as *Ṣāḥib Fakhkh*, whose martyrdom was predicted and praised by the Holy Prophet (ṣ) as well as other Holy Imams, such as Imam al-Bāqir (‘a), as is reported by

78- Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, *`Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* 2:225-226, H. 1. (The translation of this tradition is quoted from Dr. `Alī Peiravi's translation of *`Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*; published by Ansariyan Publications – 2006.)

Abu'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, in his book of *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*.

According to the same reference book the allegiance to *Ṣāḥib Fakhkh* was as follows: "I swear allegiance to you that I will abide by Almighty Allah's Book and His Messenger's traditions (*Sunnah*), and that only Allah is to be obeyed and never disobeyed and I call on you to attain the pleasure of Muḥammad's Household ('a)."

Moreover, the revolt of *Ṣāḥib Fakhkh* and Yaḥyā ibn `Abdullāh was preceded by a consultation with Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim ('a), as affirmed by the rebels themselves.

Abu'l-Faraj has also reported the following narration on the authority of a number of his trustworthy reporters:

When the `Abbāsids were able to extinguish the revolution of *Ṣāḥib Fakhkh*, they beheaded him and his allies and brought their heads before Mūsā ibn `Īsā, the `Abbāsid senior authority. A group of the descendants of Imam Ḥasan ('a) and Imam Ḥusayn ('a) witnessed the scene. Mūsā ibn `Īsā addressed Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim ('a) saying, "This is the head of Ḥusayn (i.e. *Ṣāḥib Fakhkh*), is it not?"

The Imam ('a) answered:

نَعْـمْ! إِنَّـا لله وَإِنَّـا إِلَيْـه رَاجِعُـونَ. مَــضَى، وَالله، مُــسْلِماً صَــالِحاً صَوَّاماً آمِراً بِالْمَعْرُوف نَاهِياً عَـنِ الْمُنْكَرِ. مَا كَانَ فِي أَهْلِ بَيْتِه مِثْلُهُ.

Yes, it is. We are Allah's and unto Him shall we return. By Allah I swear, he has passed away as a Muslim: righteous, observant of much fasting, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong. His like has not existed among the members of his household.

The `Abbāsid ruler could not answer the Imam ('a).[79]

79- Refer to Al-Māmuqānī, *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl* 1:337, biography of ⇨

al-Ḥusayn ibn `Alī (*Ṣāḥib Fakhkh*).
In this reference book, the author displays all the narrations reported on this matter and then compares them with each other, concluding the same results that we have cited earlier.

OBSERVANCE OF LEVEL OF TOLERATION

The fourth measure adopted by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) to ensure the security of the virtuous community was the observance of the maximum degree of toleration and readiness to keep doctrinal secrets and details. In plain words, the Holy Imams (‘a) investigated the capability of each individual for keeping the secrets of the virtuous community, based on the reality that the individuals of this community were of various psychological and spiritual levels regarding their capability to stand burdens and pressures, abide by their covenants and pledges, keep secrets, comprehend the intellectual and doctrinal contents of such secrets, and exercise self-discipline. Accordingly, it is essential to deal with each individual in relation to his own potential.

Although all of the virtuous community are believers and share the same doctrine, commitments, general qualifications and are equal in rights and duties, it is important to consider the level of faith of each individual of the virtuous community concerning readiness to abide by their duties and responsibilities and deal with them cautiously and carefully, so as to maintain:

(i) a spirit of justice and impartiality by burdening individuals with only that which they can psychologically and spiritually bear,

(ii) firmness, progress and growth of relations among individuals, and

(iii) security of the virtuous community.

In many of their traditions and statements, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) stressed the necessity of following this policy.

Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (‘a) is reported to have said:

ذُكِرَت التَّقيَّةُ يَوْماً عِنْدَ عَلِيٍّ، عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ، فَقَالَ: لَوْ عَلِمَ أَبُو ذَرٍّ مَا فِي قَلْبِ سَلْمَانَ لَقَتَلَهُ. وَقَدْ آخَى رَسُولُ اللهِ، صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، بَيْنَهُمَا، فَمَا ظَنُّكَ بِسَائِرِ الْخَلْقِ؟

One day, the issue of *taqiyyah* was discussed before Imam `Alī (‘a). He thus commented, “Had Abū-Dharr known what was in Salmān’s heart, he would have killed him, although the Messenger of Allah (ṣ) had concluded bonds of fraternity between these two. What do you think about (the situation of) other people?[1]

Expounding the doctrinal aspect of this fact in the personalities of his companions, Imam al-Bāqir (‘a), according to an authentic tradition reported from Abū-`Ubaydah al-Ḥadhdhā' said:

وَاللهِ، إِنَّ أَحَبَّ أَصْحَابِي إِلَيَّ أَوْرَعُهُمْ وَأَفْقَهُهُمْ وَأَكْتَمُهُمْ لِحَدِيثِنَا. وَإِنَّ أَسْوَأَهُمْ عِنْدِي حَالاً وَأَمْقَتَهُمْ لَلَّذِي إِذَا سَمِعَ الْحَدِيثَ يُنْسَبُ إِلَيْنَا وَيُرْوَى عَنَّا فَلَمْ يَقْبَلْهُ، إِشْمَأَزَّ فِيهِ وَجَحَدَهُ وَكَفَّرَ مَنْ دَانَ بِهِ، وَهُوَ لاَ يَدْرِي لَعَلَّ الْحَدِيثَ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا خَرَجَ وَإِلَيْنَا أُسْنِدَ. فَيَكُونُ بِذَلِكَ خَارِجاً عَنْ وِلاَيَتِنَا.

By Allah (I swear), the dearest to me among my companions are the most abstinent (from prohibitions of Almighty Allah), the most skilled in jurisprudence (or knowledge in general), and the most observant of concealing our secrets. The most evil of them and the most despised by me are those who, when hearing a tradition ascribed to us and reported from us fail to approve of it, are disgusted by it and deny it and deem faithless those who believe it, even though they are not actually sure whether this tradition has been said by and

1- *Ikhtiyār Ma`rifat al-Rijāl* (known as *Rijāl al-Kashshī*), 1:70.

reported from us. Such persons leave the circle of loyalty to us.[1]

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) have also confirmed that faithful believers are of various ranks and levels and, according to these ranks, they differ from one another in capability and power to bear doctrinal issues. According to a validly reported tradition, Sadīr has reported that Imam al-Bāqir (‘a) addressed him as follows:

إِنَّ الْمُؤْمنينَ عَلَى مَنَازِلَ؛ مِنْهُمْ عَلَى وَاحِدَة وَمِنْهُمْ عَلَى إِثْنَتَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ عَلَى ثَلاَث وَمِنْهُمْ عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ وَمِنْهُمْ عَلَى خَمْسٍ وَمِنْهُمْ عَلَى ستّ وَمِنْهُمْ عَلَى سَبْعٍ. فَلَوْ ذَهَبْتَ تَحْمِلُ عَلَى صَاحِبِ الْوَاحِدَة ثِنْتَيْنِ لَمْ يَقْوَ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِ الثِّنْتَيْنِ ثَلاَثاً لَمْ يَقْوَ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِ الثَّلاَث أَرْبَعاً لَمْ يَقْوَ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِ الأَرْبَعِ خَمْساً لَمْ يَقْوَ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِ الْخَمْسِ سِتّاً لَمْ يَقْوَ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِ السِّتّ سَبْعاً لَمْ يَقْوَ،

Verily, faithful believers are of various ranks. Some of them hold one rank only, others two ranks, some three ranks, some four ranks, some five ranks, some six ranks, and some seven ranks. If you impose (an act that cannot be done except by those who hold) two ranks upon one who has one rank only, he will certainly fail to undertake it, and if you impose three ranks upon one who has two only, he will fail to undertake it, and if you impose four ranks upon one who has three only, he will fail to undertake it, and if you impose five ranks upon one who has four only, he will fail to undertake it, and if you impose six ranks upon one who has five only, he will fail to undertake it, and if you impose seven ranks upon one who has six only, he will fail to undertake it. So also for other ranks of faith.[2]

1- Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī* 2:223, H. 7.
2- Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:45, H. 3.

وَعَلَى هَذه الدَّرَجَات.

Furthermore, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) shed light on the specifications and qualifications by which the ranks of faithful believers can be realized and which can be adopted as criterion for the capability to endure doctrinal issues and be trustworthy. It has been narrated on the authority of `Ammār ibn al-Aḥwaṣ that Imam al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said:

إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى وَضَعَ الإِيمَانَ عَلَى سَبْعَة أَسْهُمٍ: عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالصِّدْق وَالْيَقِين وَالرِّضَا وَالْوَفَاء وَالْعِلْمِ وَالْحِلْمِ. ثُمَّ قَسَّمَ ذَلِكَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ. فَمَنْ جُعِلَ فِيه هَذه السَّبْعَةُ الأَسْهُمِ فَهُوَ كَامِلٌ مُحْتَمِلٌ. وَقَسَّمَ لِبَعْضِ النَّاسِ السَّهْمَ، وَلِبَعْضٍ السَّهْمَيْنِ، وَلِبَعْضٍ الثَّلاَثَةَ حَتَّى إِنْتَهَوْا إِلَى سَبْعَة. لاَ تَحْمِلُوا عَلَى صَاحِبِ السَّهْمِ سَهْمَيْنِ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِ السَّهْمَيْنِ ثَلاَثَةً فَتَبْهَظُوهُمْ. كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى يَنْتَهِيَ إِلَى سَبْعَةٍ.

Verily, Almighty Allah has allocated faith in seven portions: piety, honesty, certitude, satisfaction, loyalty, knowledge, and forbearance, and He distributes these among people. He who gains all seven portions completely is definitely perfect (in faith) and capable (of carrying all seven portions). Allah grants some people one portion, two portions, and three portions up to seven. Do not impose two portions of faith upon him who has been granted one portion only nor three portions upon him who has been granted two portions only and so on up to seven portions, lest you overburden them.[1]

1- Shaykh al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:42, H.1.
Imposition of two portions of faith upon one who has been granted one portion only, means to charge a person that has a specific amount of faith with an act that cannot be done except by one who enjoys much more faith. A person of less faith would be incapable of undertaking the task.

According to another tradition, the Imam instructs his companions to investigate and differentiate those who claim Shī`ism.

It has been narrated that one of Imam al-Ṣādiq's companions visited him and said, "May Allah accept me as ransom for you! By Allah, I love you and love whoever loves you. Master, how numerous your Shī`ah are!"

The Imam ('a) asked, "Can you mention how numerous they are?"

"They are many," answered the man.

"Can you count them?" asked the Imam ('a).

"They are too many to be counted," answered the man.

The Imam ('a) then said:

أَمَـــا لَـــوْ كَمُلَـــتِ الْعِـــدَّةُ الْمَوْصُـوفَةُ، ثَلاَثُمائَـةٍ وَبِـضْعَةَ عَـشَرَ، كَـانَ الَّـذِي تُرِيـدُونَ. وَلَكِـنَّ شِـيعَتَنَا مَـنْ لاَ يَعْـدُو صَـوْتُهُ سَـمْعَهُ، وَلاَ شَـحْنَاؤُهُ بَدَنَهُ، وَلاَ يَمْدَحُ لَنَا غَالِياً، وَلاَ يُخَاصِمُ لَنَا وَالِياً، وَلاَ يُجَالِسُ لَنَا عَائِباً، وَلاَ يُحَدِّثُ لَنَا ثَالِباً، وَلاَ يُحِـبُّ لَنَـا مُبْغِـضاً، وَلاَ يُبْغِضُ لَنَا مُحِبّاً.

Verily, if the predicted number is achieved, which is a few more than three hundred men, the matter that you desire will definitely come to pass. However, our true Shī`ah are only those whose voices do not exceed their ability to hear (i.e., those who do not talk very loudly) and whose enmity does not exceed their bodies (i.e., those who suffer themselves but do not make others suffer or impose on them). They neither praise us exaggeratively, nor quarrel with our loyalists, nor sit with one who criticizes us, nor love one who hates us, nor hates one who loves us.

The man asked, "What should we then do with so many Shī`ah who claim that they follow the faith of Shī`ism?"

The Imam (‘a) answered:

فِـيهِمُ التَّمْيِيـزُ، وَفِـيهِمُ التَّمْحِـيصُ، وَفِيهِمُ التَّبْدِيلُ...

May they be separated (the good from the bad) and distinguished and transformed.[1]

1- Abū-Zaynab al-Nu`mānī, *Kitāb al-Ghaybah* pp. 203-204; `Allāmah al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār* 68:164-165, H. 16.